# THE ART OF MIYAZAKI'S SPIRITED AWAY

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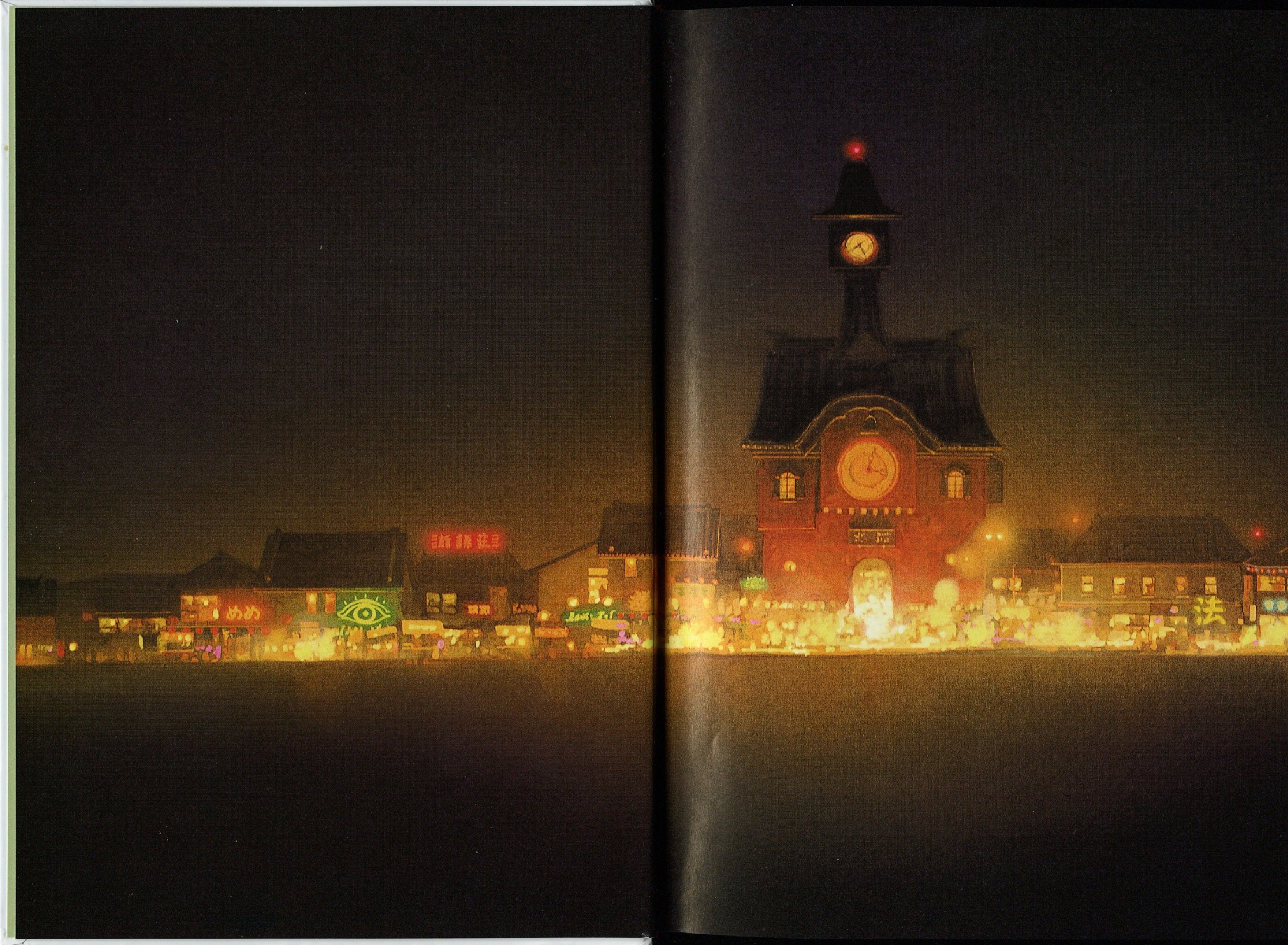
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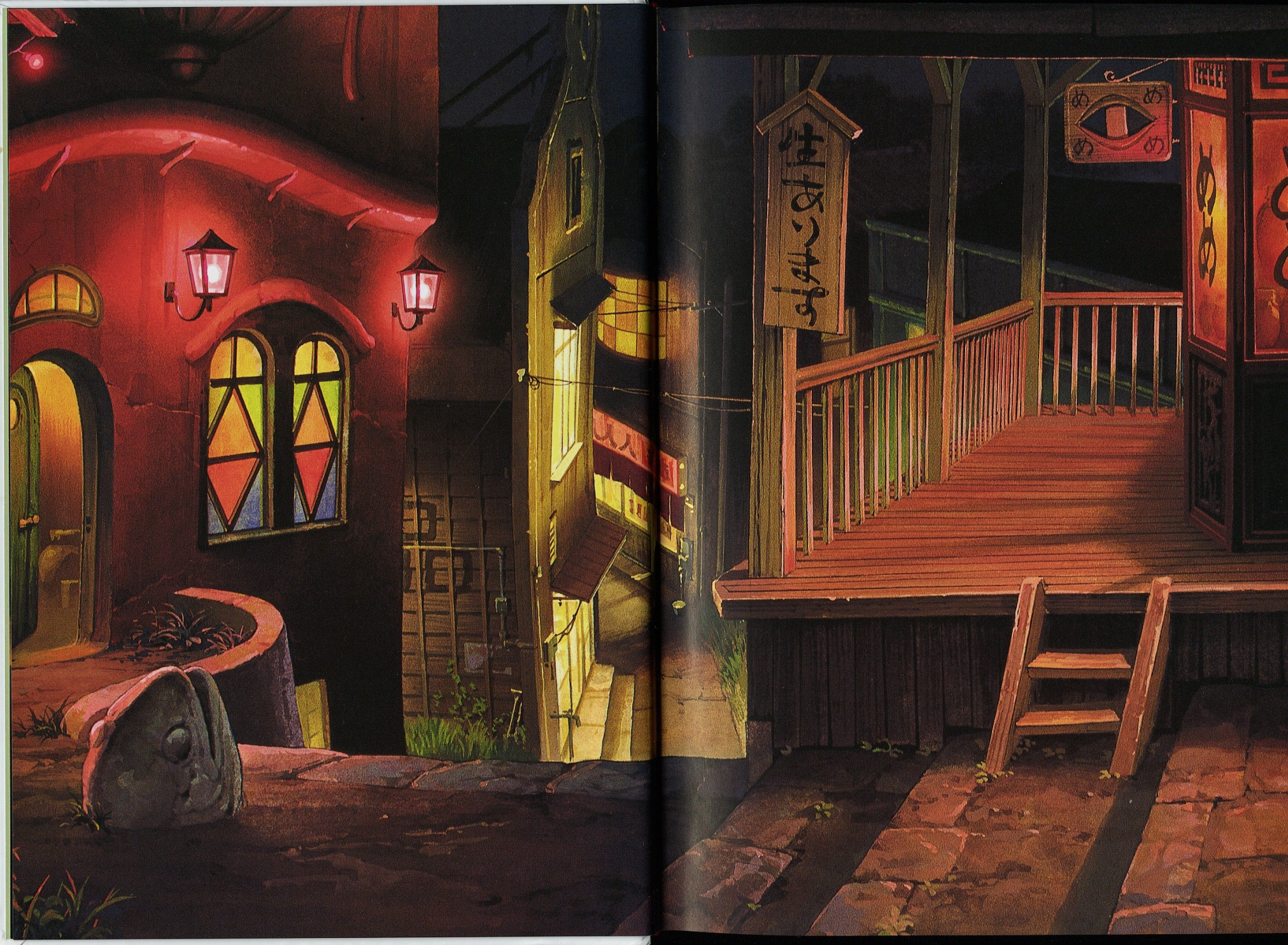
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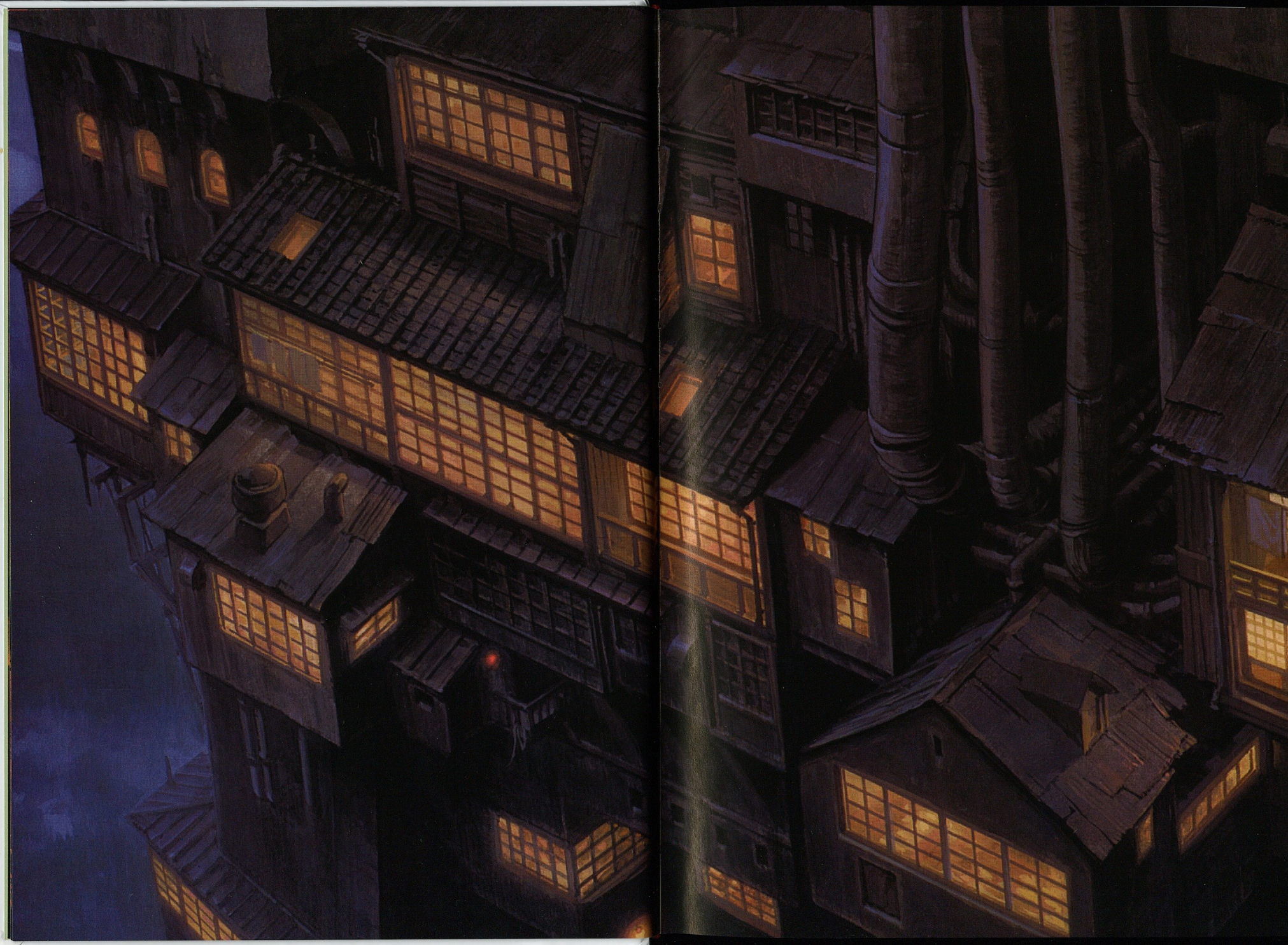

THE ART OF
MIYAZAKI'S
SPIRITED AWAY

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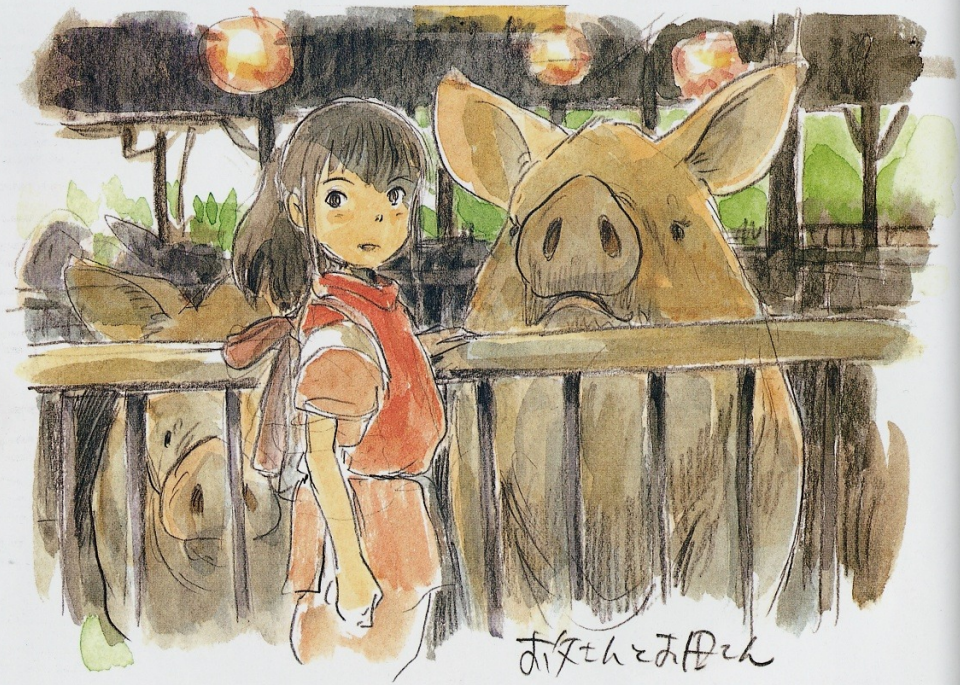
This book is a collection of concept sketches, background art, cel art, and digital data (still images) that tell the story of *Spirited Away*, an animated film conceived, scripted, and directed by Hayao Miyazaki. All concept sketches are by Hayao Miyazaki. Concept art is by Yoji Takeshige. Character designs are by supervising animator Masashi Ando. Note: scene images without captions were created from digital data.

*Bath house entrance protected by the stone god (background) (p. 3). View with Clock Tower Shop (background) (pp. 4-5). Shops with signboards at night (background) (pp. 6-7). Bath house at night (background) (pp. 8-9). Interior of bath house (background) (pp. 10-11). Cover is from Hayao Miyazaki's concept sketch.*

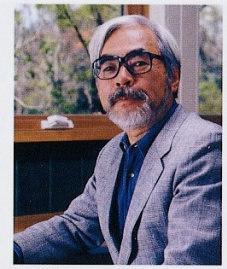


*Concept sketch by Hayao Miyazaki. Chihiro with her parents, who have been transformed into pigs.*



# Chihiro's Mysterious Town

## The Aim of this Film



## by Hayao Miyazaki

*Hayao Miyazaki was born 1941 in Tokyo. After receiving a degree in political science and economics from Gakushuin University, Miyazaki worked at Toei-Doga (currently Toei Animation) creating scene designs and original drawings for* Little Norse Prince Valiant *(1968). Later, he moved to A Pro, where he was responsible for stories, screenplays, scene-settings, and key animation. In 1973, he, along with Isao Takahata and others, moved to Zuiyo Images. Miyazaki went on to work on scene design and scene organization for* Heidi *(1974) and to direct* Future Boy Conan *(1978) and* Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro *(1979).*

*In 1985, after working for Nippon Animation and Telecom, Miyazaki became co-founder of Studio Ghibli. He wrote and directed the screenplay for* Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind, *a film based on his original manga serialized in* Animage *magazine. Since then he has directed the animated feature films* Laputa: The Castle in the Sky *(1986),* My Neighbor Totoro *(1988),* Kiki's Delivery Service *(1989),* Porco Rosso *(1992), and* Princess Mononoke *(1997). He is the author of the books* The House Where Totoro Lives, Shuna's Journey, Mononoke Hime, *and* From This Point Forward.

I would say that this film is an adventure story even though there is no brandishing of weapons or battles involving supernatural powers. However, this story is not a showdown between right and wrong. It is a story in which the heroine will be thrown into a place where the good and the bad dwell together, and there, she will experience the world. She will learn about friendship and devotion, and will survive by making full use of her brain. She sees herself through the crisis, avoids danger and gets herself back to the ordinary world somehow. She manages not because she has destroyed the "evil," but because she has acquired the ability to survive.

The main theme of this film is to describe, in the form of a fantasy, some of the things in this world which have become vague, and the indistinct world which tends towards erosion and ruin.

In everyday life, where we are surrounded, protected, and kept out of danger's way, it is difficult to feel that we are working to survive in this world. Children can only enlarge their fragile egos. Chihiro's skinny legs and her sulky face are their symbols. However, once the reality becomes clear and once she encounters a crisis, she will surely be aware of the life she actually possesses and of a capacity for flexibility and patience, and for decisive judgement and action.

Most people just panic and collapse while shouting, "It can't be true." Those people will be erased or eaten up in the situation in which Chihiro finds herself. In fact, Chihiro's being strong enough not to be eaten up is just what makes her a heroine. She is a heroine not because she is beautiful or because she possesses a unique mind. This is the key characteristic of this work, and therefore it is a good story for ten-year-old girls.

Words are power. In the world Chihiro wandered into, words have a great importance and immutability. At "Yuya," where "Yubaba" rules, if Chihiro were to say, "I don't

want to do this," or "I want to go home," she would be eliminated by the sorceress. She would be made to wander about with nowhere to go until she vanishes or is made into a hen to lay eggs until she is eaten. On the contrary, if Chihiro says, "I will work here," even a sorceress can't ignore her. In these days, words are thought to be light and unimportant like bubbles, and no more than the reflection of a vacuous reality. It is still true that words can be powerful. The fact is, however, that powerless words are proliferating unnecessarily.

To take a name away from a person is an attempt to keep them under perfect control. Sen shuddered when she realized that she was beginning to forget her own name. And besides, every time she goes to see her parents at the pigpen, she becomes used to seeing her parents as pigs. In the world where Yubaba rules, people must always live among dangers which might swallow them up.

In a dangerous world, Chihiro began to come alive. The sulky and languid character will come to have a stunning and attractive facial expression by the end of the film. The nature of the world hasn't been changed in the least. I am arguing in this film that words are our will, ourselves and our power.

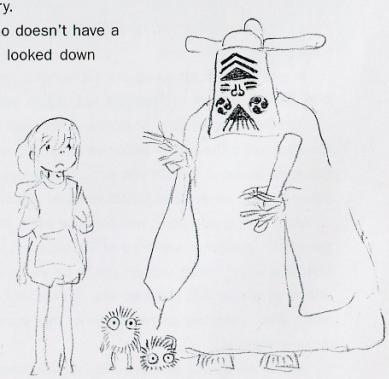
This is also the reason why I created a fantasy set in Japan. Though it is a fairy tale, I don't want to make it like a Western type of story which allows many possibilities for escape, and is likely to be taken as a cliché. However, I would prefer to say that it is rather a direct descendant of "Suzume no Oyado" (The Sparrows' Inn—a trap in which sparrows lure people by food and pleasant surroundings) or "Nezumi no Goten" (The Mouse's Castle—similar to "The Sparrows' Inn"), which appear in Japanese folk tales. Our ancestors had been dining at the Suzume no Oyado and enjoying a feast at the Nezumi no Goten.

I created a world where Yubaba lives in pseudo-western style to make it seem as if it is something that has been seen somewhere else and to make it uncertain whether it is a dream or reality. And also, Japanese traditional design is a rich source for the imagination. We are often not aware of the rites, designs, and tales of the gods. It is true that "Kachi-kachi Yama" and "Momotaro" are no longer persuasive. However, I regret to say that it is a poor idea to push all the traditional things into a small folk-culture world. Surrounded by high technology and its flimsy devices, children are more and more losing their roots. We must inform them of the richness of our traditions.

I think the world of film can have a striking influence by fulfilling the traditional functions, as a piece of a vividly colored mosaic, to a story which can be applied today. That means, at the same time, we can gain a new understanding of what it means to be the residents of this island country.

In this borderless age, a man who doesn't have a place to put down his roots will be looked down upon. A place is the past and also a history. A man without history, or a people that forgot its past will have no choice but to disappear, like a shimmer of light or to lay eggs endlessly as a hen and consumed.

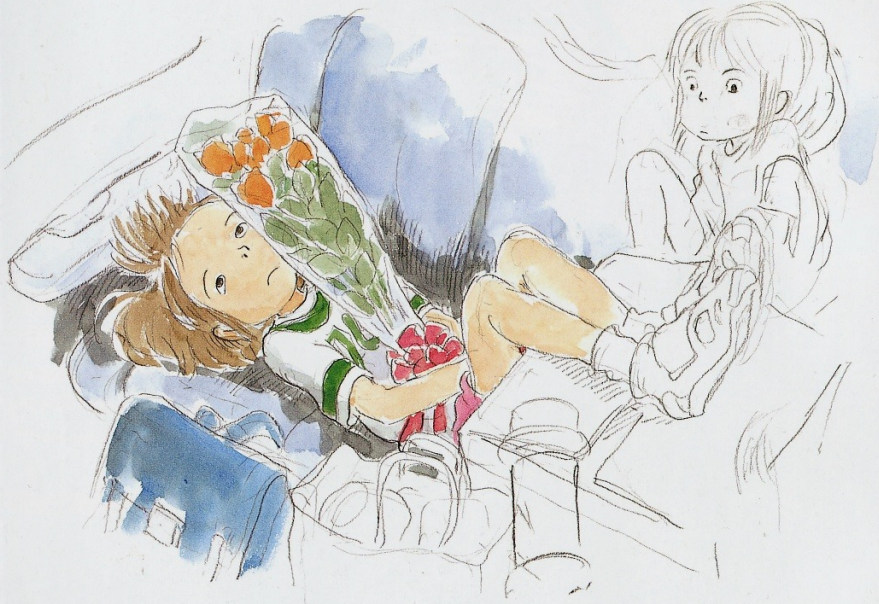
I would like to make this film something through which ten-year-old girls can encounter what it is that they truly want.



*Concept sketch of Sen, Susuwatari, and Kasuga.*

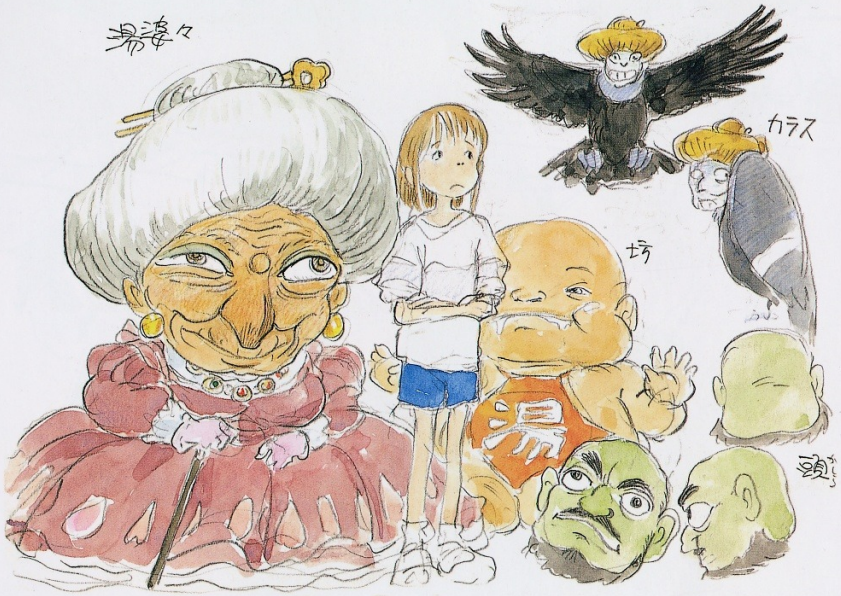
**This chapter features concept sketches and storyboards drawn by the director of *Spirited Away*, Hayao Miyazaki. These sketches illustrate Miyazaki's initial ideas on which the film was based.**

*Background: Yubaba's vase*



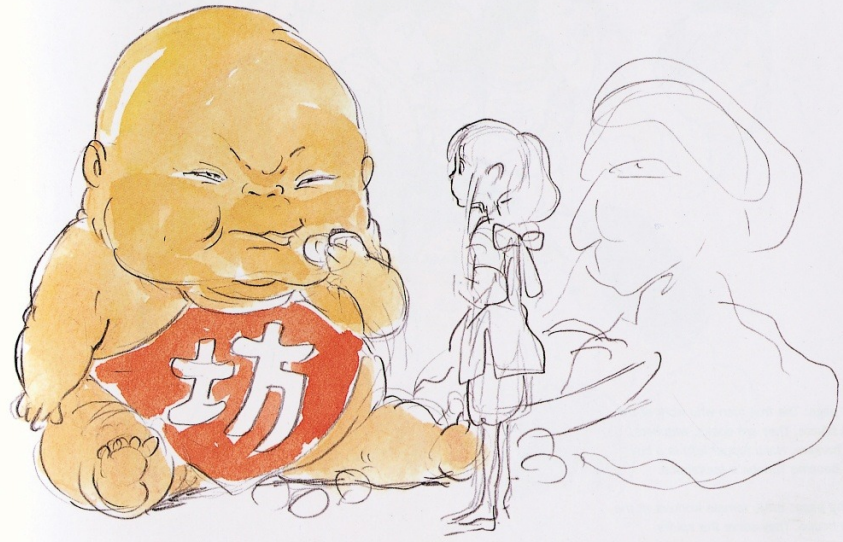
*This page: Chihiro in the back seat while her family drives to their new home. She clutches a bouquet of flowers her classmates gave her as a going-away present.*

*Facing page (top): Sen/Chihiro and Lin serve a spirit at the bath house.*
*Facing page (bottom): Sen watches a dragon climb the sky.*




*This page: The inhabitants of the strange world Chihiro wanders into. Yubaba is the sorceress who runs a bath house for spirits. Baby is Yubaba's son. The human-headed crow is Yu-Bird. Kashira are a trio of disembodied heads who bounce around Yubaba.*

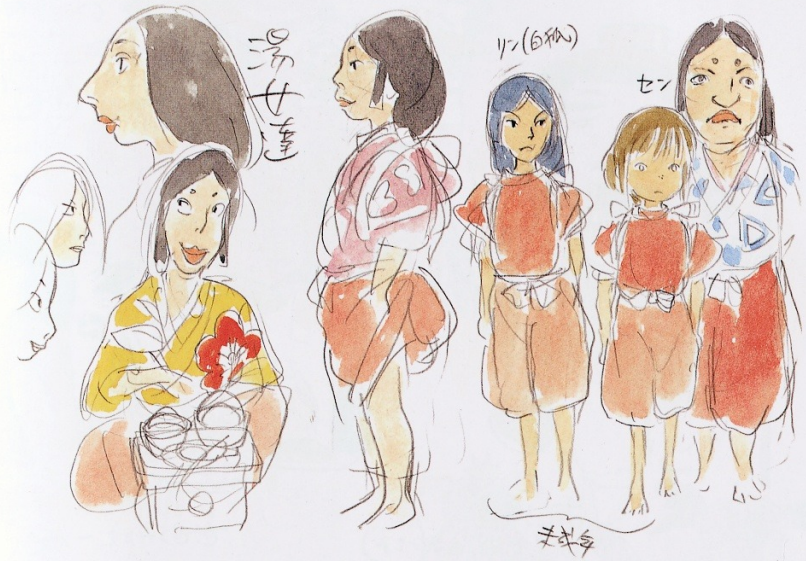
*Facing page (top): Contrast between Yubaba and her twin sister Zeniba.*
*Facing page (bottom): Contrast between Sen/Chihiro and Baby.*



*This page: The frog men who work at the bath house. They are cooks, watchers, and barkers. Haku (upper left) is a boy who became Yubaba's apprentice.*

*Facing page: Yuna, female workers at the bath house. They serve the spirits.*





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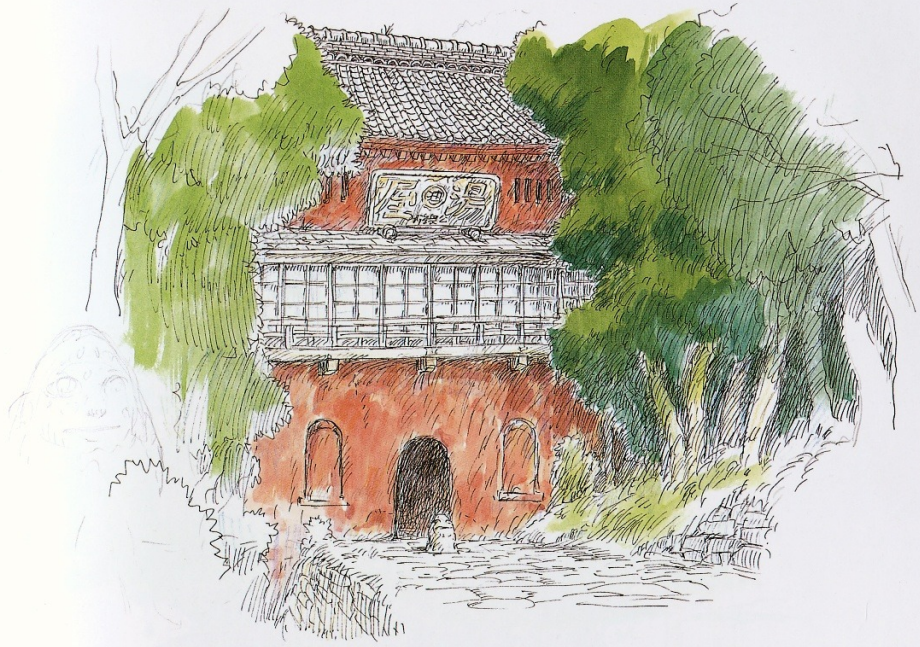
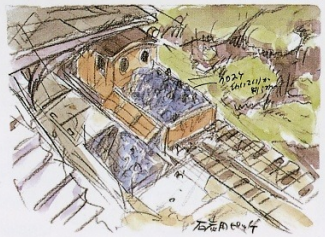
*Spirits visiting the bath house. In addition to these spirits created by Miyazaki, other spirits designed by members of the animation staff also appear in the film.*



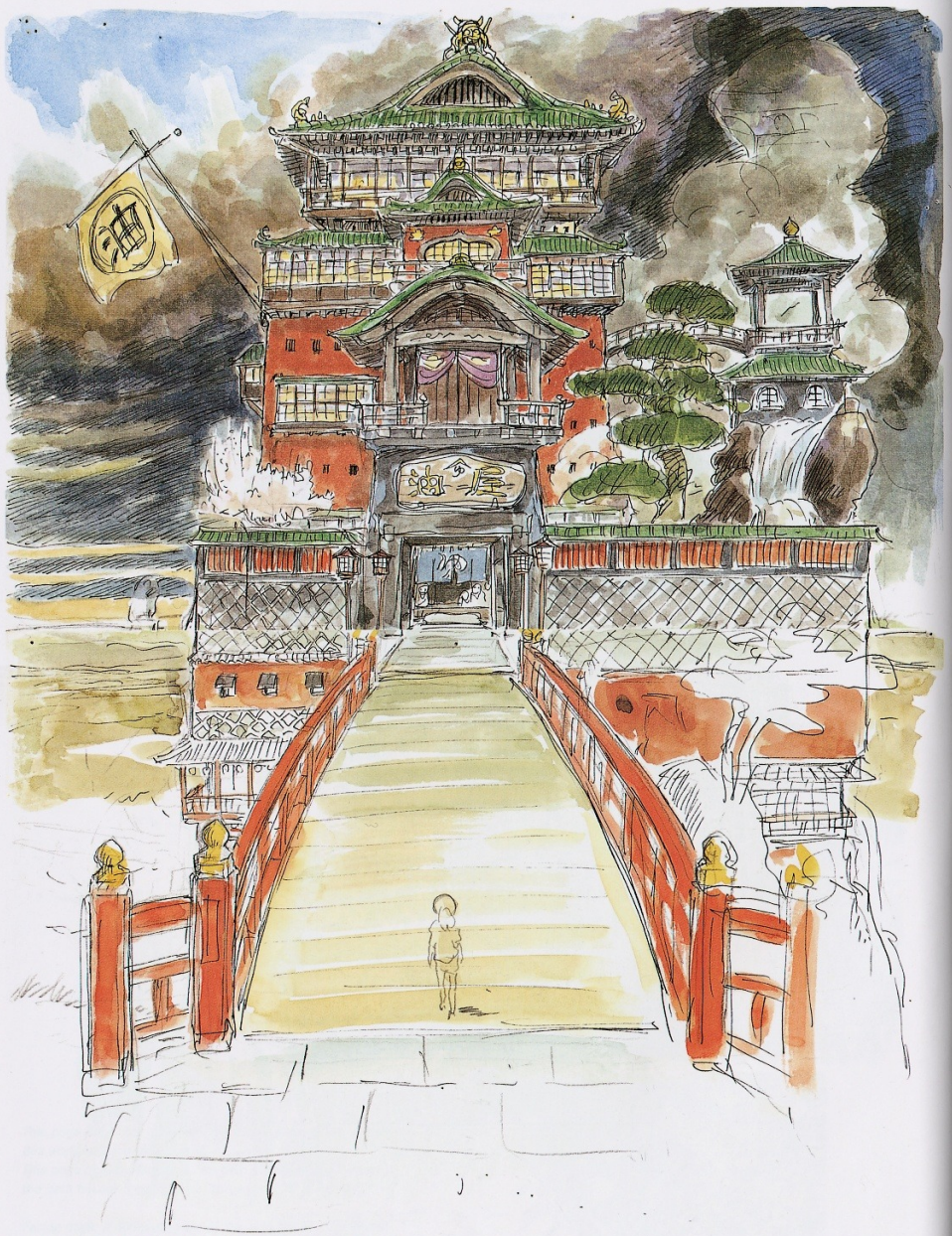
*Facing page, this page (top): The entrance to the bath house deep inside the forest Chihiro and her parents stray into.*

*This page (bottom left): Building interior resembling a church space or the waiting room of a train station. Chihiro's family enters the other world through this location.*
*This page (bottom right): The stone spirits who protect the entrance.*

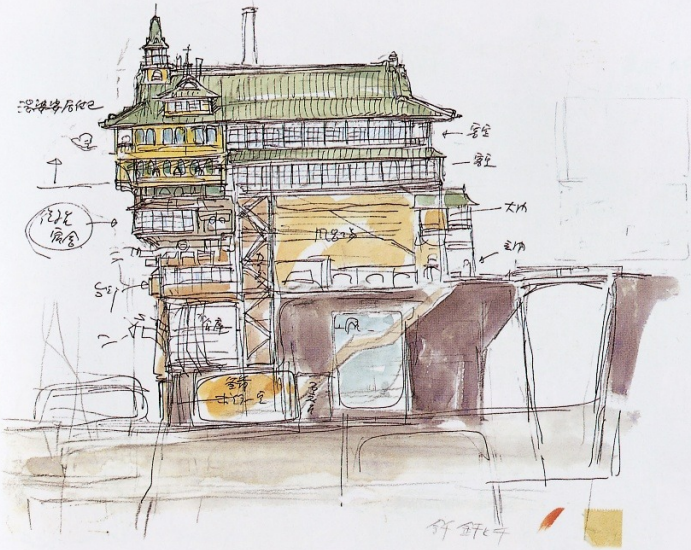


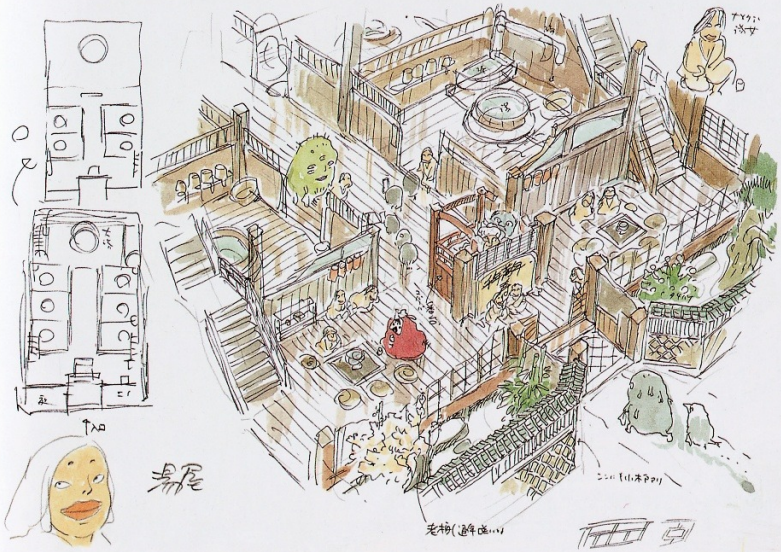
*This page (top): The clock tower. It is the gateway between this world and the other world.*
*This page (middle, bottom): The train station at the bottom of the bath house. Freight trains deliver coal for the boiler.*

*Facing page: A complete view of the bath house. The lowest level consists of the boiler room. The workers' dorms are located above the boiler room. The middle level consists of the bathing quarters and leisure rooms for spirits. The top level consists of Yubaba's office and living quarters.*



*This page: A view of the bath house seen from the entrance.*

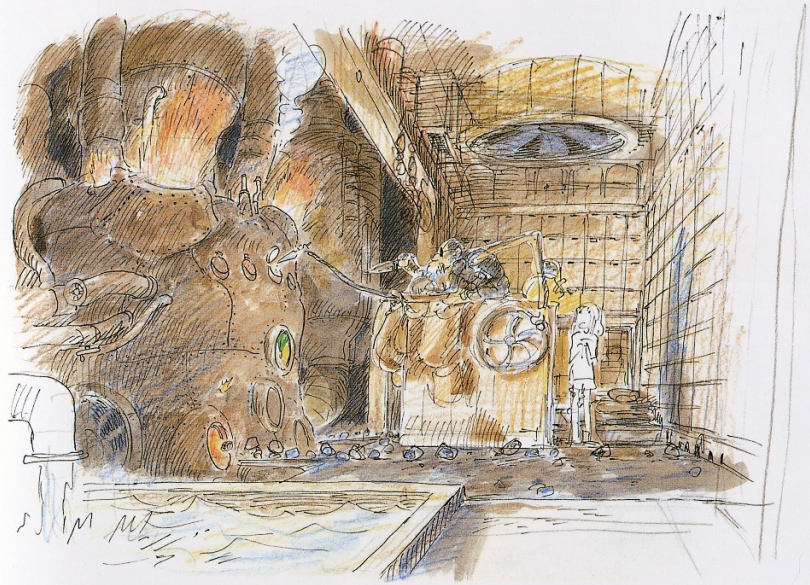


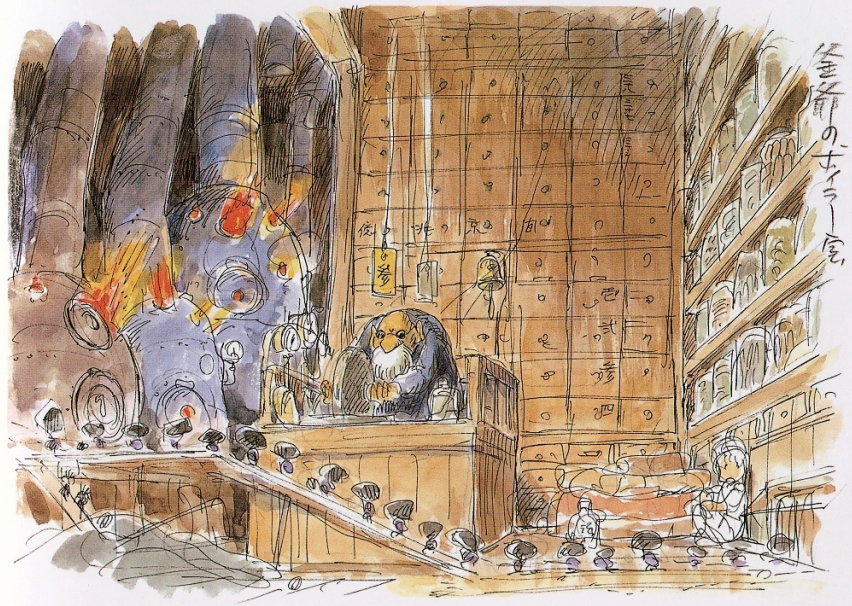


*Facing page (top): Cross-section of the bath house.*
*Facing page (bottom): Bath house interior depicting the spatial relationship between the bathing quarters and the entrance.*

*This page (top): Rough sketch of the bath house and spirits arriving by tour bus.*
*This page (bottom): Bath house interior viewed from the bathing quarters.*

*Facing page: Kamaji's boiler room located in the bath house basement. Drawers filled with herbs are located in the back. With each order, he makes medicinal herbs by mixing herbs selected from various drawers. Created from soot, Susuwatari are assigned to carry coal.*



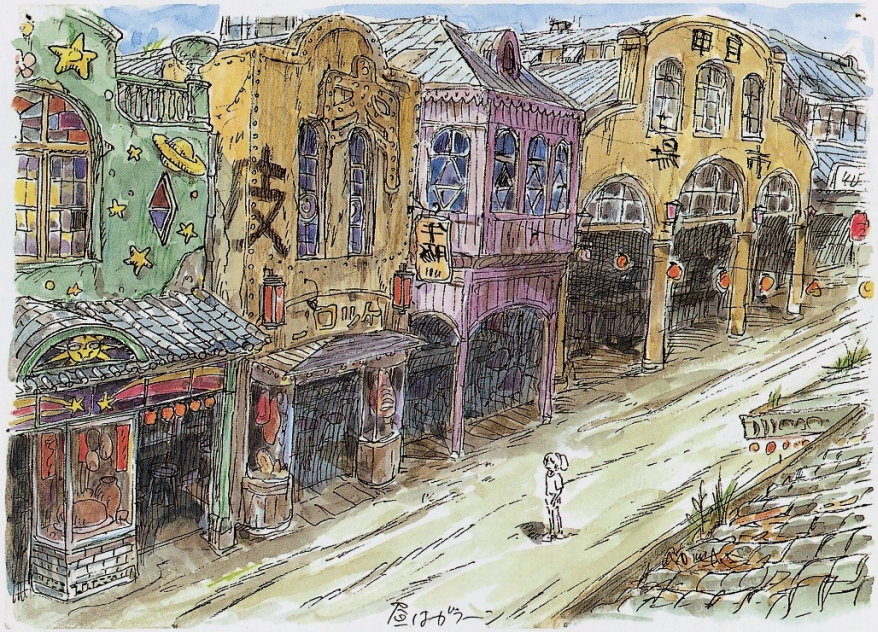


*Facing page (top): Bath house interior, watch-stand area. Yubaba gives orders from the watch-stand.*
*Facing page (bottom): On her first day of work at the bath house, Sen/Chihiro gazes out from the hall of the women's quarters.*

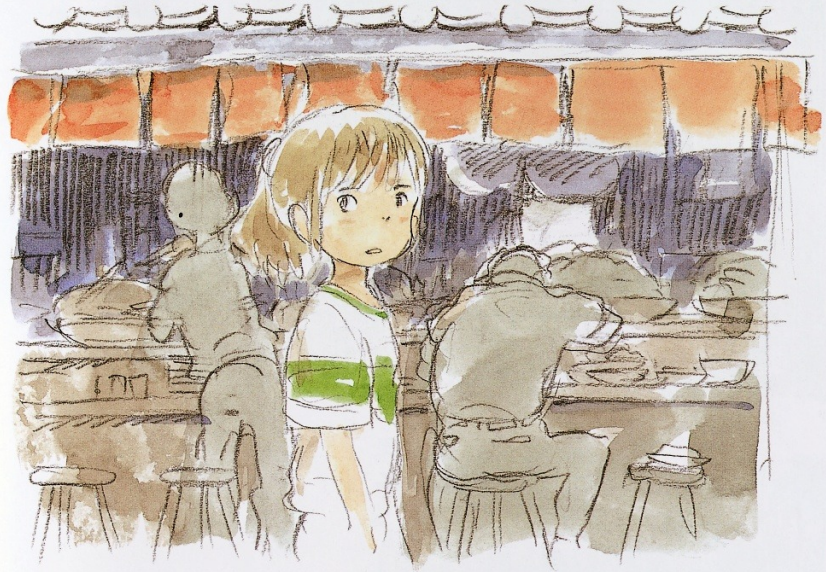
*This page: Chasing after her parents, Chihiro finds herself in the deserted town. This occurs at the beginning of the film.*

*This page, facing page (top): At dusk the stores light up and mysterious entities pass through them.*

*Facing page: Then at night the whole street turns into an entertainment quarter.*

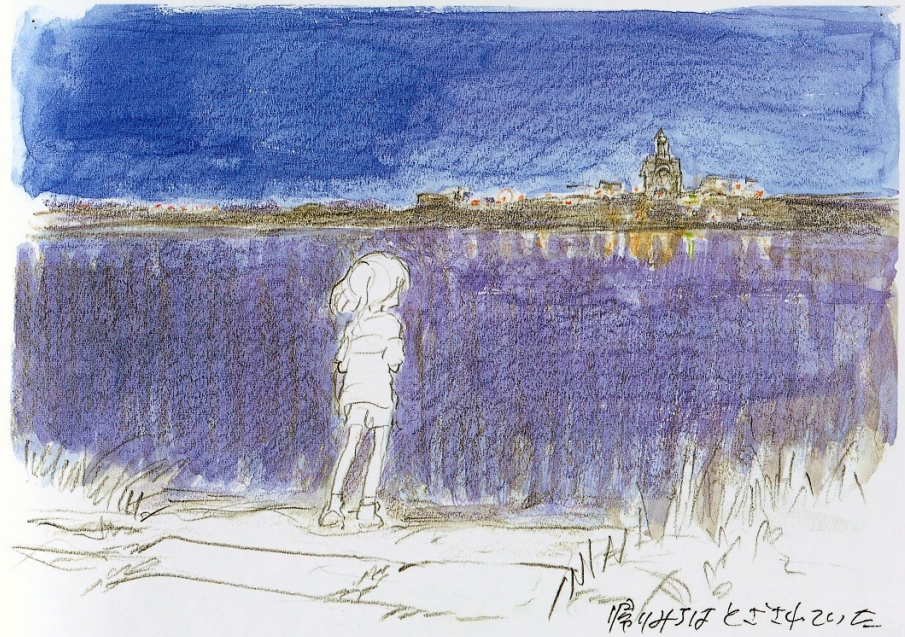


*Storyboards depicting an early scene where Chihiro's parents recklessly eat the food left out at a stand. The boards illustrate the key scene and provide a general sequence.*



*Continuation of the storyboard sequence. Leaving her food-fixated parents behind, Chihiro wanders into the town, where she encounters a boy named Haku in front of the bath house. Night falls quickly, and Chihiro returns to the restaurant only to find...*

*...her parents, mysteriously transformed into pigs. Terrified, Chihiro runs away, but discovers the clock tower they had entered is now across the sea on the distant horizon. Having lost her way, Chihiro becomes despondent.*



お金あります

*Preceding pages, this page: Storyboards illustrating the bath house frenzy when the reeking Stink Spirit arrives. The putrid spirit turns out to be a river spirit with an old man's face. In return, the spirit gives Sen/Chihiro a dumpling that will lift curses.*

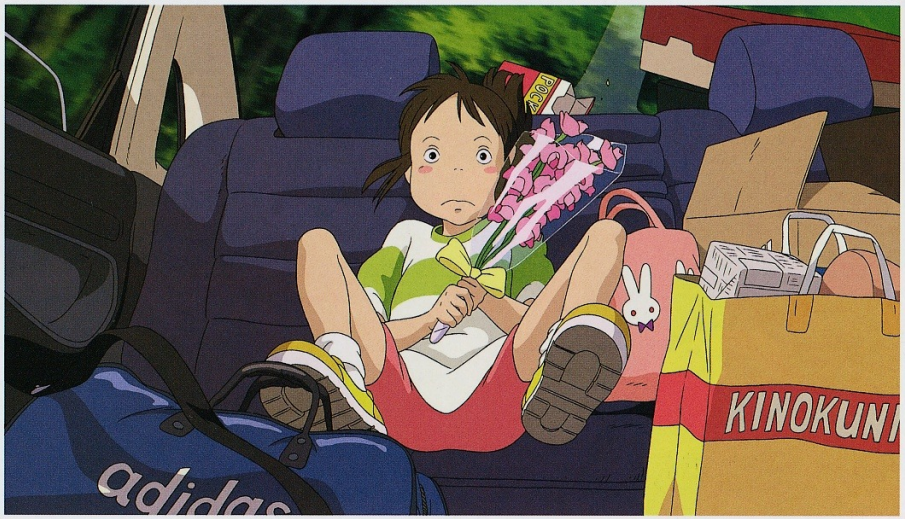
*Concept sketches for No Face, who plays an important role in the film. Because these are initial designs, they differ somewhat from the character in the final film.*

*Concept sketches for the ending of the film. The background drawings based on these concept sketches were digitally processed for the film.*

**This chapter features concept art, backgrounds, character designs, and scenes (digital data) sequenced according to the film's storyline. Commentary is provided by supervising animator Masashi Ando and art director Yoji Takeshige.**

*Background: interior of Yubaba's room*

***Ten-year-old Chihiro Ogino is an only child who's a little spoiled. On the way to their new house, she and her parents wander onto a small road which leads them down a mysterious tunnel. After exiting the tunnel, they wander into a strange town. There she finds a bath house spirits visit to rest and heal themselves. As she wanders around the town she encounters a mysterious boy who cautions her to leave before nightfall. But cursed for eating the town's food, her parents are turned into pigs...***




1

# Chihiro Ogino

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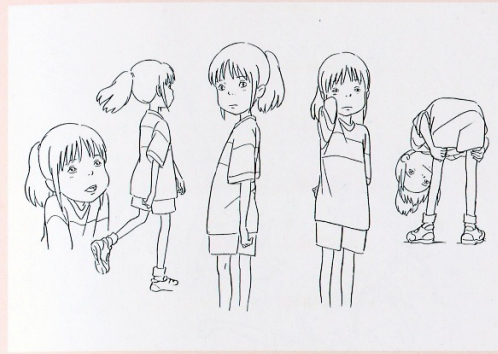
*1-3: The film's heroine. A ten-year-old girl. Unhappy about her family moving to a new place, she sulks, but then...*
*4-6: Pose illustrations evoking the gestures of a ten-year-old girl. (character designs)*





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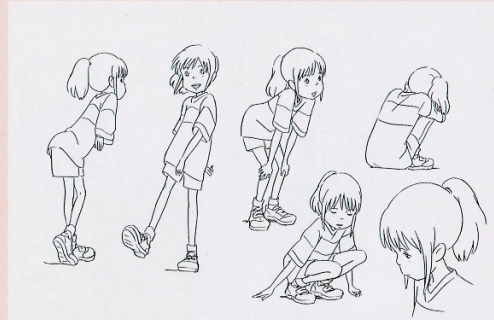
"The work I did as supervising animator was essentially the same as my work on *Princess Mononoke*. Mr. Miyazaki would do rough corrections of the submitted key animation, which I would then touch up. However, I was responsible for the final overall character design. For example, Mr. Miyazaki would constantly flatten Lin's chest line, making her look boyish. Given her masculine personality, I thought it would be more interesting if she had a woman's body, so I increased her chest line. So this time I emphasized my own approach instead of seeking out Mr. Miyazaki's intentions." (Ando)



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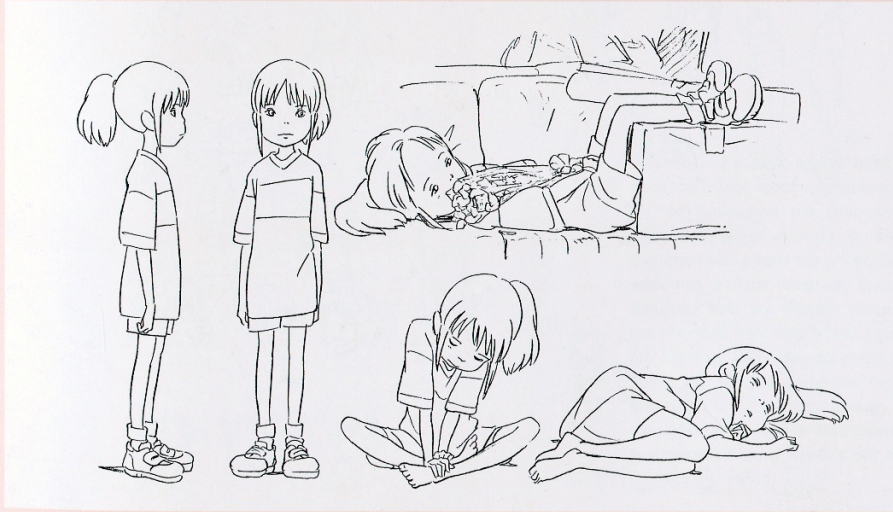

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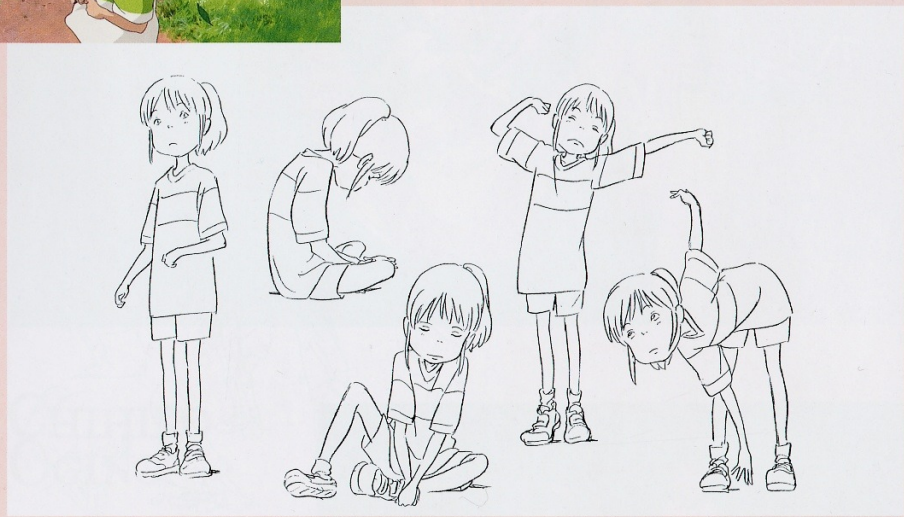

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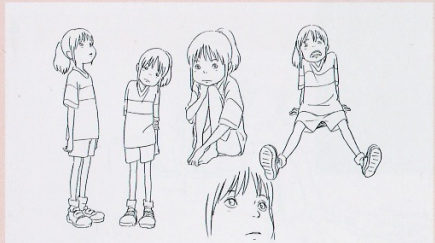

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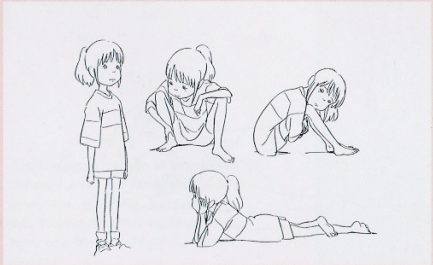

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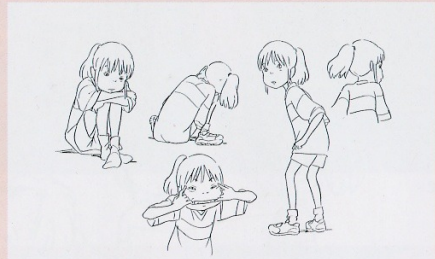

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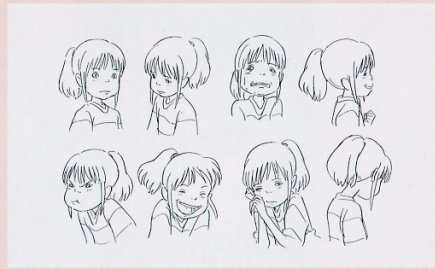

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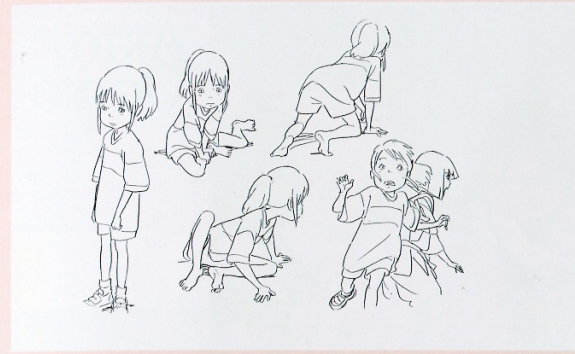

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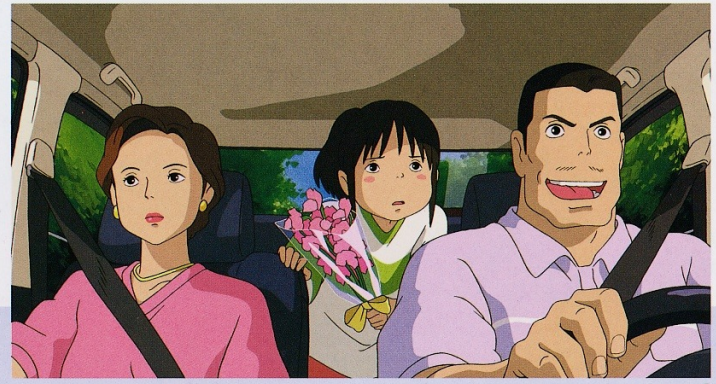
*1: After exiting the mysterious tunnel with her parents, Chihiro is terrified by the sight of the clock tower.*
*2-9: Pose illustrations of Chihiro's gestures. (character designs)*

8

9

"Chihiro's character wasn't based on a particular model. Apparently, Mr. Miyazaki had his producer-friend's daughter in mind, but by the time I was shown her photo, my work was already underway and I thought, 'Well, she doesn't resemble her at all. Her body's thin.' But Mr. Miyazaki originally requested a pudgy girl, so that's why her face ended up being round. Although I made her body thin, I made sure her head and body weren't out of proportion." (Ando)

# Akio Ogino



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"Just like Chihiro, her father is based on no one in particular. At first I modeled him after Mr. Miyazaki's producer-friend, so I drew him with a fat figure, but that made him look too old. Furthermore, he was to have an insatiable appetite, so in the end I drew him as a jock who's both audacious as well as irresponsible. This personality isn't so common in Mr. Miyazaki's films, which tend to have more brainy characters." (Ando)

*1: In the film he is only referred to as Chihiro's father. He is 38 years old. He is overly confident and optimistic.*
*2-5: Pose illustrations depicting her parents' interaction with Chihiro. (character designs)*



*6-9: Just like her husband, this character is only referred to as Chihiro's mother. (character designs)*
*10: She is 35 years old. She is realistic and assertive, an equal to her husband.*

"The mother too is unprecedented in Mr. Miyazaki's films. She is a no-nonsense, contemporary woman. Mother characters depicted in Mr. Miyazaki's films tend to be nurturing and kind, but Yuko is the opposite type. She wears earrings and lipstick. Originally Mr. Miyazaki illustrated the mother with permed hair, wearing gaudy makeup. I thought that made her look too middle-aged, so I gave her a more cool image." (Ando)

6

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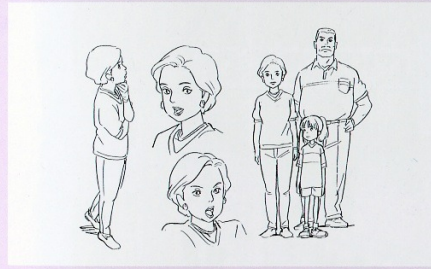

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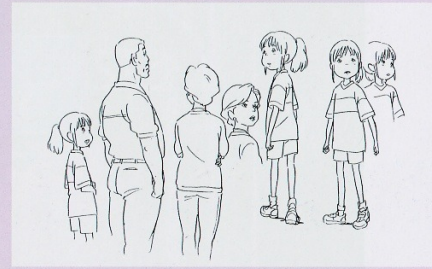

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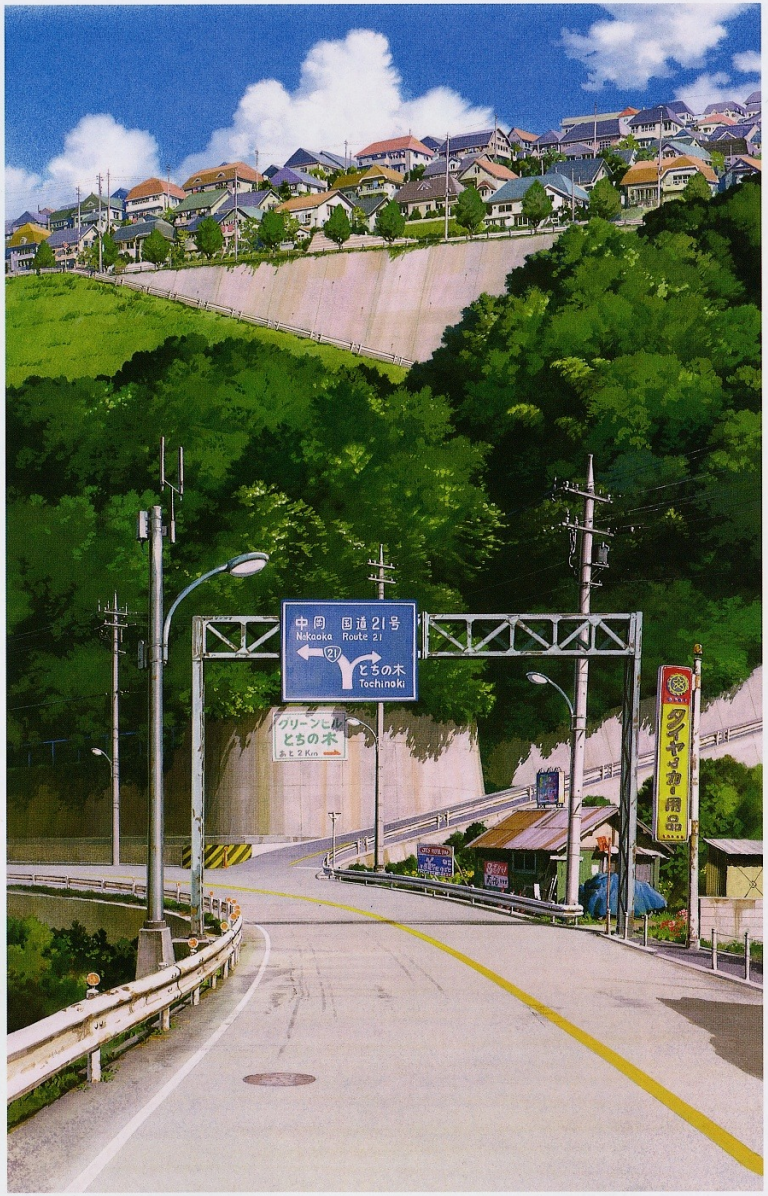
# Yuko Ogino

10

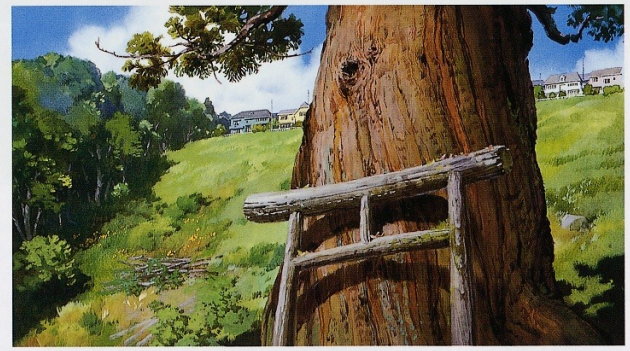



1

*1: View on the way to their new house. Note the residential development on the quarried mountain peak. (background)*
*2-3: Ancient tree towering under the blue sky. Stone shrines and an old Shinto gateway are scattered around its trunk. (background)*

# Way To Woods

2



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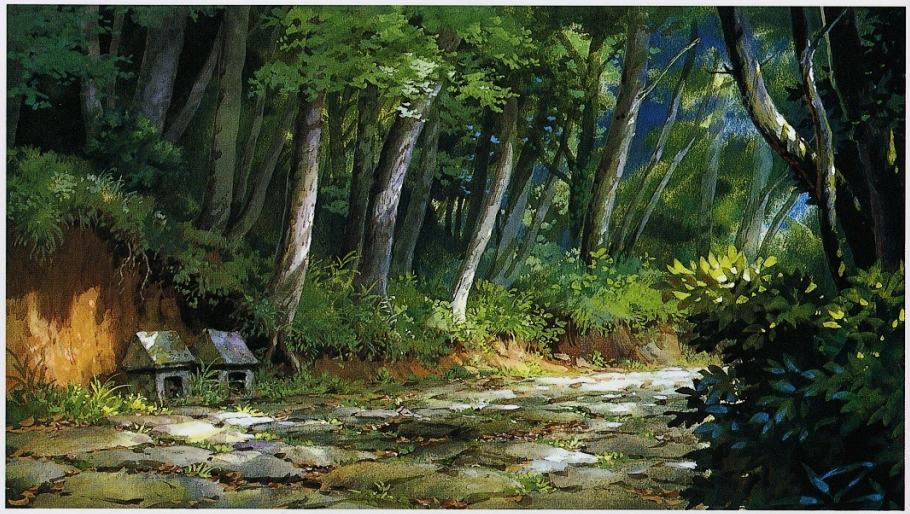

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*1: The road inside the forest that Chihiro's family wanders into. (background)*
*2-3: Chihiro's family enters the deep forest. The road turns to stone pavement. (art boards)*

3

## Between the real world and alternate world

"The art design is based on the director's sketches and storyboards as well as subsequent layouts drawings by the director. Following this work, I incorporated color textures and lighting and drew all the concept art, including samples for the staff. The background drawings were divided up between a dozen of our staff painters. I requested Kazuo Oga* (see editorial note, below) for the opening forest sequence. Mr. Oga is an expert in drawing Japanese landscapes and natural settings and because his painting style differs from mine, I thought this would provide a nice contrast between the real world and the alternate world. The bean field landscapes that appear during the family's move, and the CG processed rhododendron material came from Mr. Oga's paintings. Even though they look simple, there's plenty of information there. I was amazed how real it could look after the CG processing.

"One difficulty I encountered was depicting old Japanese houses, which are very prominent in this film. The roofs and houses were supposed to be somewhat lopsided. The director's layout had this kind of atmosphere, so I tried my best to add perspective without making them look unnatural. But then they could end up looking really lopsided, so I came up with a tricky technique that would make them look natural." (Takeshige)

**Editorial Note: Kazuo Oga was the art director for the Studio Ghibli films* My Neighbor Totoro *and* Pompoko.

1

# The Tunnel Of The Stone Spirit

2

3

*1: Chihiro's family's car abruptly stops at the big red building. The entrance is protected by a stone spirit. (concept art)*
*2-3: Stone spirit protecting the entrance. Covered with moss, the spirit is double-faced. (background)*

2

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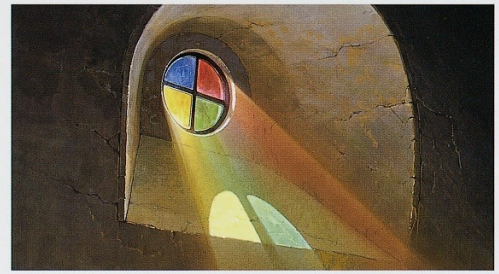

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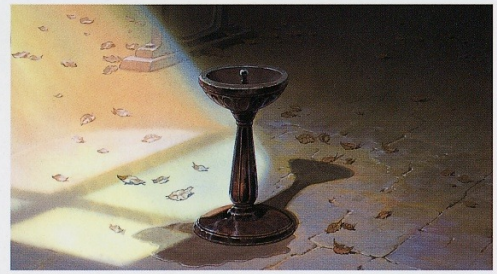

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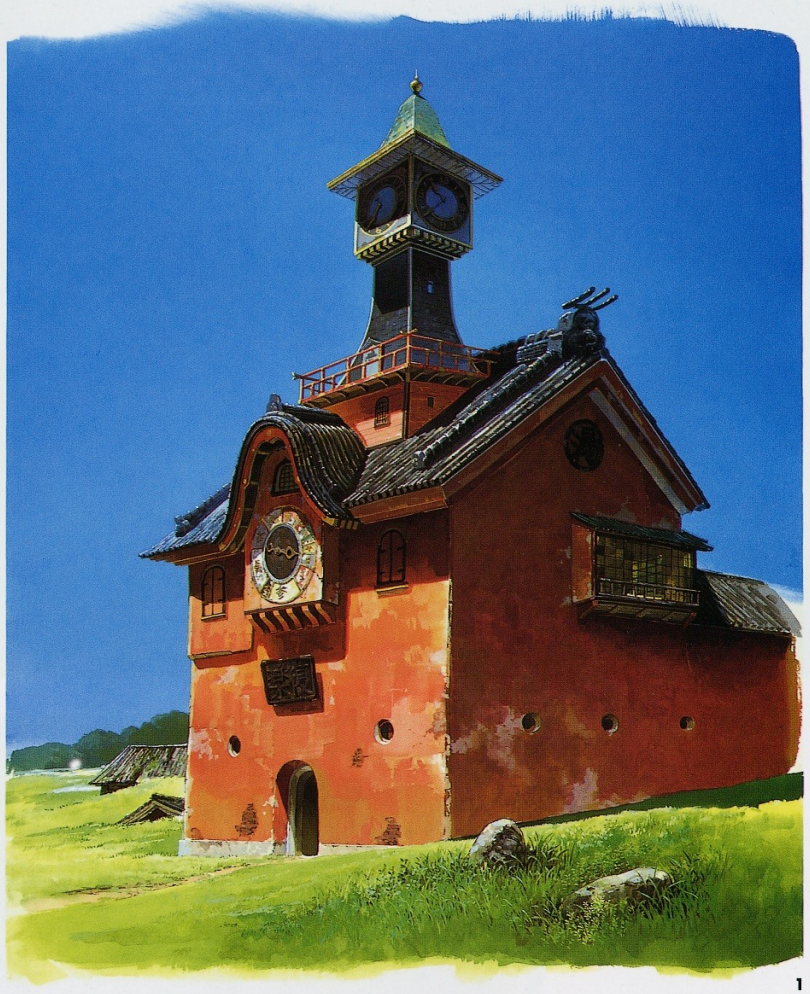
*1-2: The wide open space inside the tunnel Chihiro's family enters. (background)*
*3-4: The building resembles an abandoned train station. A bright ray of sun pours in through the stained glass window. (background)*



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*1: The strange clock tower under the blue sky. A vermilion-red building.designed in the Kawagoe-warehouse style. (background)*
*2: Clock tower seen from below. (background)*
*3: Plains covered with summer grass. White clouds drifting by. (concept art)*
*4-5: Stone stairs with garden lantern, as if located on a river bank. Her parents rush up the stairs. (backgrounds)*

4

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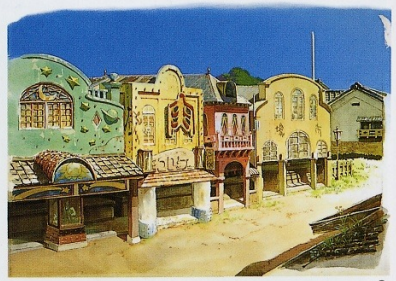

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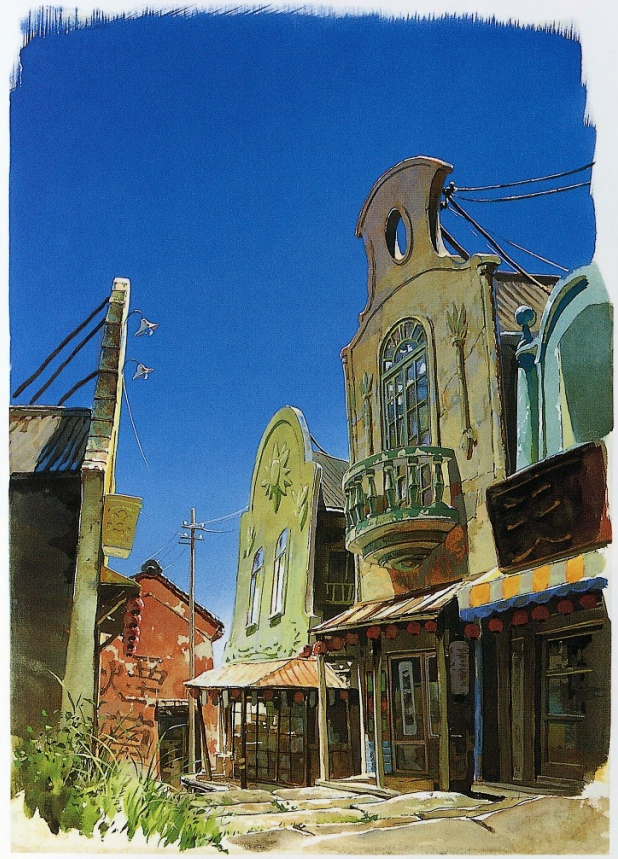
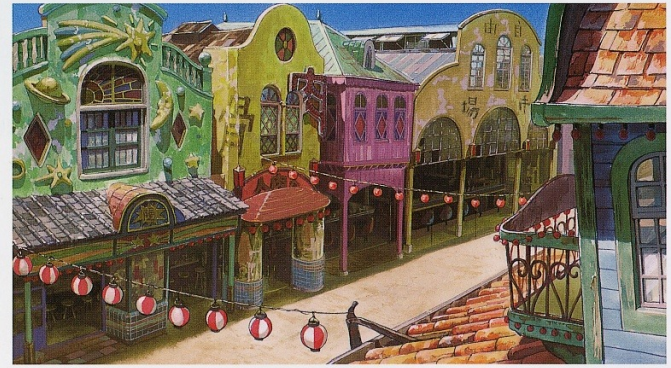


4

# The Strange Restaurant District

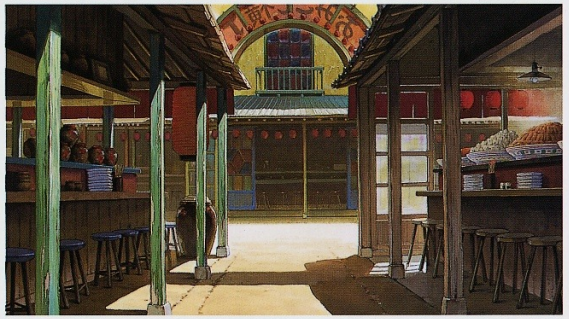
*1-4: The signboard architecture becomes visible as they climb the stone stairs. The buildings are awkwardly lopsided. (concept art, background)*
*5: Flashy restaurant district in what appears to be the center of town.*



5

1

*1-3: The restaurant district, bathed in afternoon sunlight. The shops all have counters. (concept art, backgrounds)*
*4-5: The restaurant district at night, illuminated by incandescent light bulbs.*
*6: Stairs in the afternoon. They are Japanese-style, an arcade of fancy restaurants. (concept art)*



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## Color design based on red

"The bath house interiors are lit up with incandescent light bulbs, so the lighting has a reddish tinge. But because this type of place is so rare these days, if we weren't careful, the lighting would end up becoming a familiar fluorescent white. So I paid close attention to the colors. Also, because I was trained in oil painting, my colors tend to be somber, so at the board stage the director requested the colors be 'more gaudy with the red almost blinding.' The reds were emphasized throughout the film, including the background drawings of the clock towers, the bath house walls, the hanging lanterns in the restaurant district, and the bridge railing. So I came up with the color design and assignments based on this red, which we might refer to as the film's 'theme color.'

"Also, unaltered match poster colors were used in some parts of this film. Unblended straight colors have rarely been used in previous Ghibli films, but since we were really going for red in this film, we decided to paint with pure red paint. There's a flashy gold in certain locations, such as the bath house interior and Yubaba's room. We used shades of yellow paint for this color. We would then touch it up with highlighting (reflection) or adding orange, and by reducing the surrounding colors, the color shined like gold. This was an effective technique." (Takeshige)

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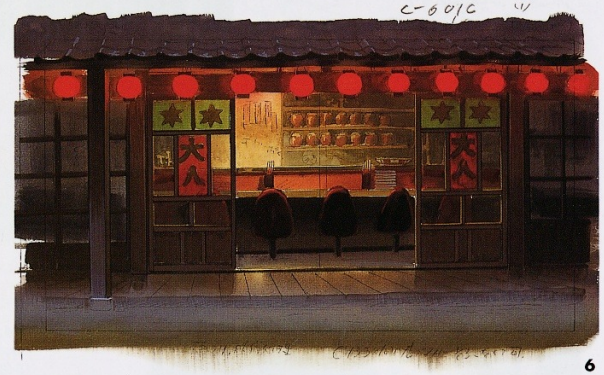
*1-6: Variations of the shadows drifting through the restaurants.*

5



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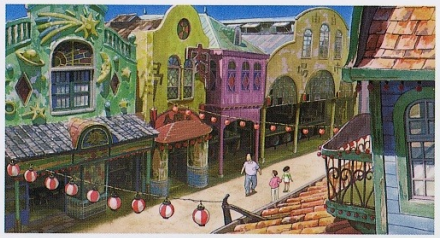

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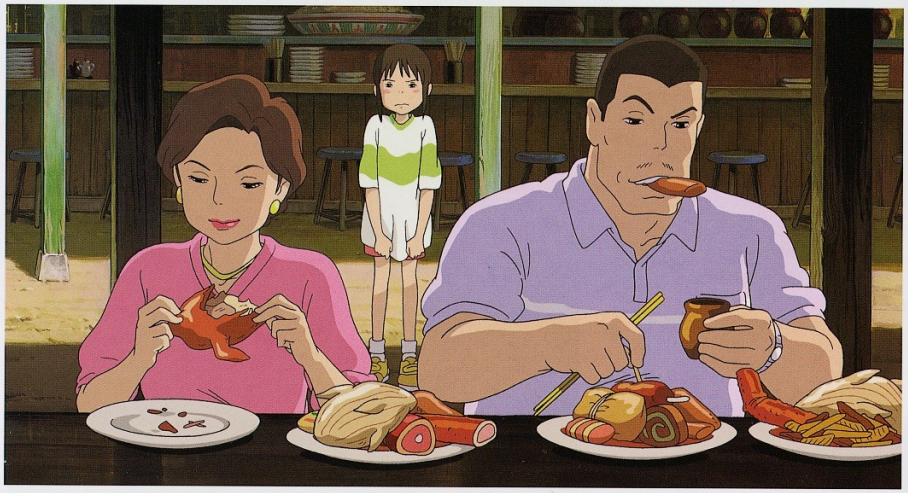

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# Parents Turn Into Pigs

*1-4: Enticed by the aroma, Chihiro's parents enter a restaurant and gorge themselves on the food there. 5-9: As a result of eating the food, the parents turn into pigs. (character designs)*

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1

# The Bath House

*1-3: The gigantic bath house soaring above the vermilion-red bridge, bathed in the west sunlight. The chimney emits black smoke while steam rises on the right. (concept art, background)*
*4, 7: The murky bottom of the gorge is a marsh immersed in what appears to be sludge. Occasionally, a two-car train emerges from the tunnel with a roaring sound. (concept art)*
*5: Giant vermilion-red garden lantern.*
*6: The bridge is supported by a steel frame.*

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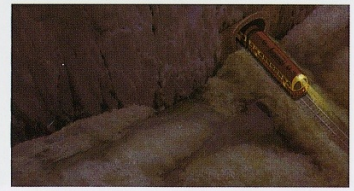

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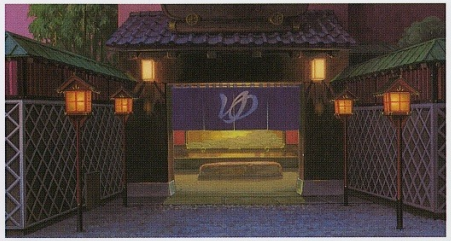

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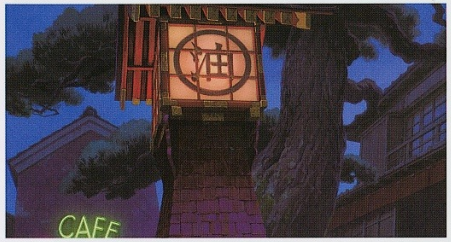


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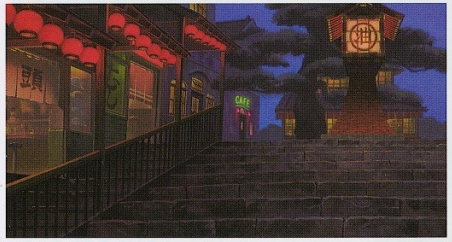

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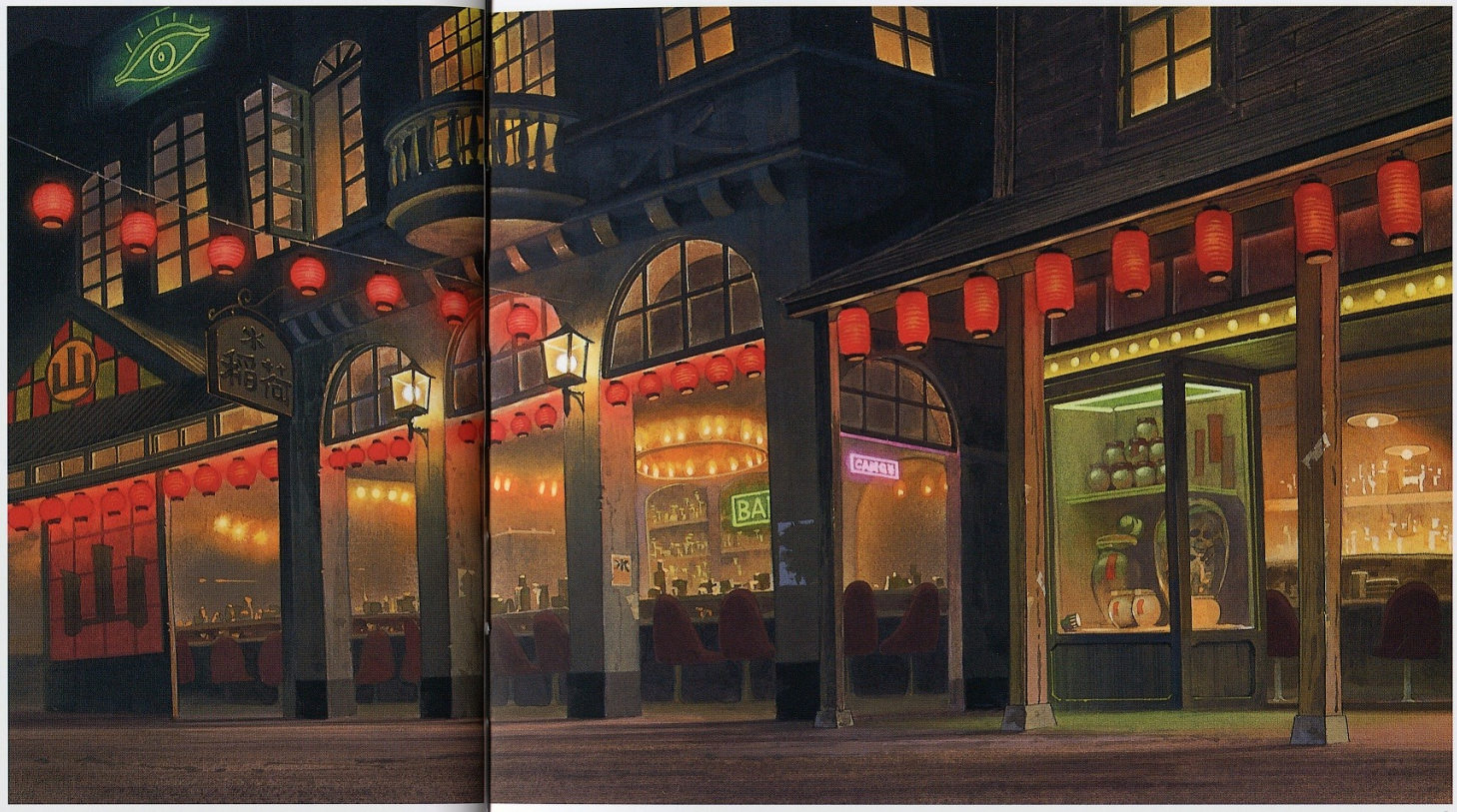
# Dusk

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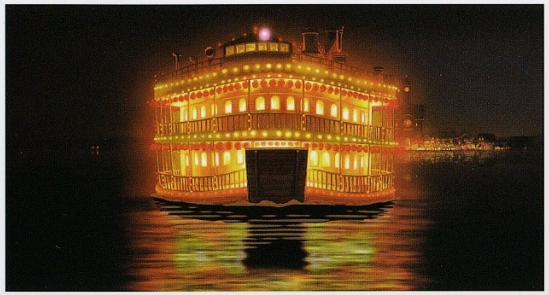
*1-5: As the area darkens, the bath house entrance (1) and the giant garden lantern (2) are lit. 6-8: The hanging lanterns light up the restaurant district and alleys. (backgrounds)*



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# Harbor

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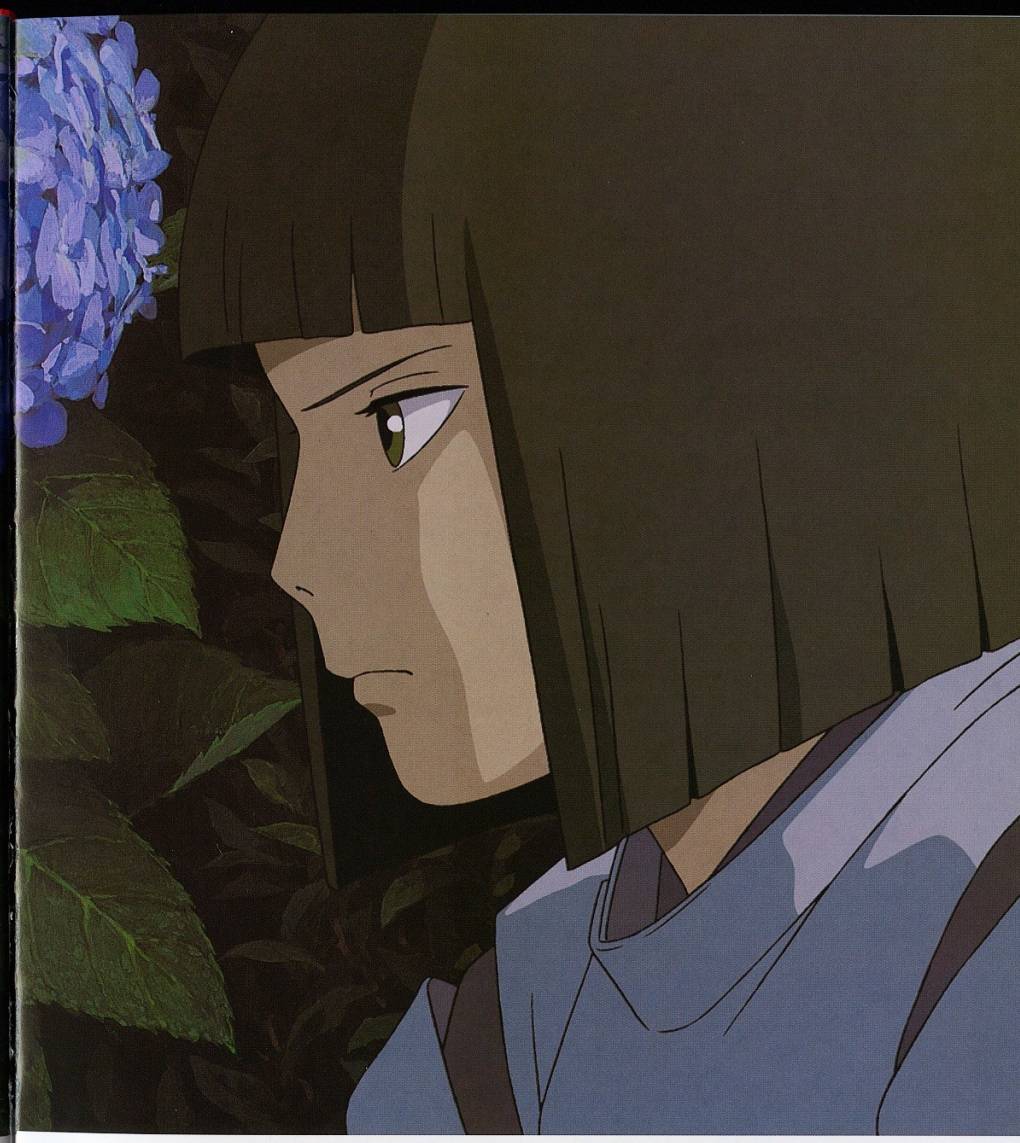
*1-2: With a brilliant glow, the ferry approaches and docks at the river bank. (concept art)*
*3: Kasuga spirits depart from the ferry.*
*4: River bank at night. The frog gargolye emerges from the soil at noon. (background)*
*5: Behind the entertainment quarters. Rows of barracks. The lights from the entertainment quarters shine above the roofs. (background)*

5



***Chihiro is left alone. She screams, "It's just a dream! Go away!" Instead, her human body nearly vanishes. The mysterious boy Haku then appears, offering Chihiro an herbal remedy. In order to survive on her own in this world, she must work for Yubaba, who runs the bath house. As a result, her name Chihiro is taken away.***

# Haku

"Haku is what Mr. Miyazaki often refers to as a 'transparent' character. It's actually quite difficult to convey 'transparency,' so I made his eyes look strange. They look into the distance, as if he has insight into a person's inner thoughts. I wanted him to be mysterious. I encircled his pupils at the center of his eyes with color. I thought the added color would make his eyes shine a little." (Ando)

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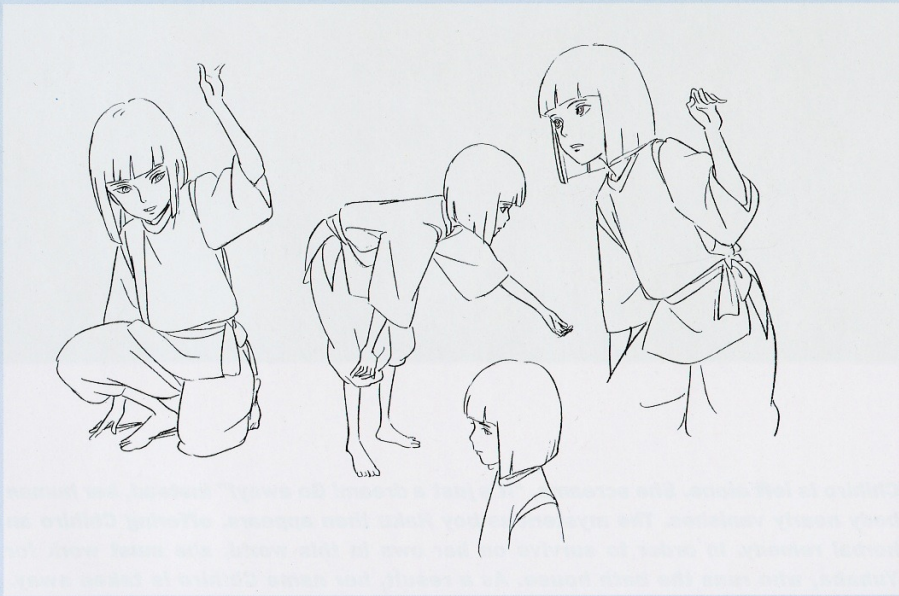
2

*1-2: The pale faced boy Haku, approximately 12 years old. He is in charge of accounting at the bath house. Upon their first encounter, he looks after Chihiro, protecting and helping her.*



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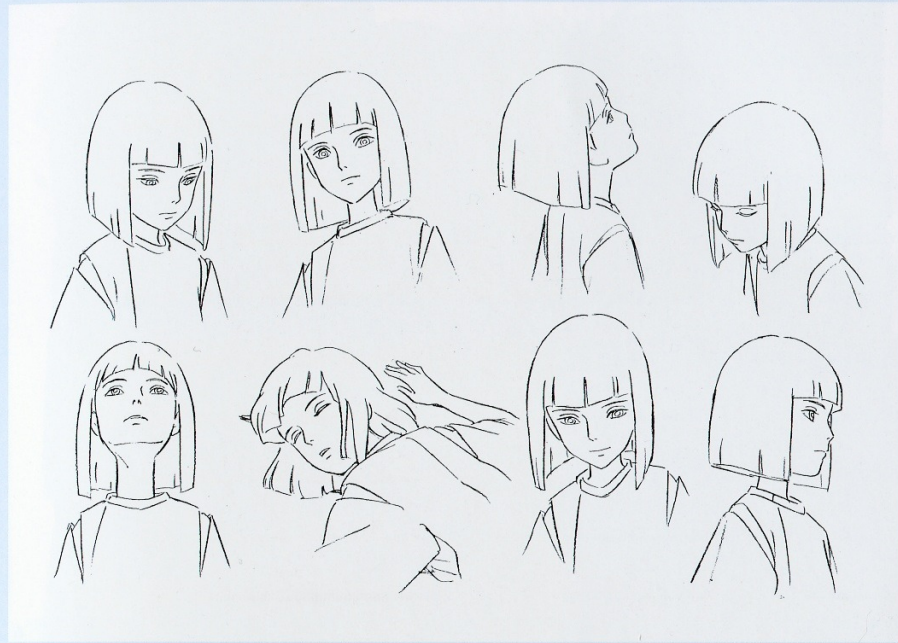

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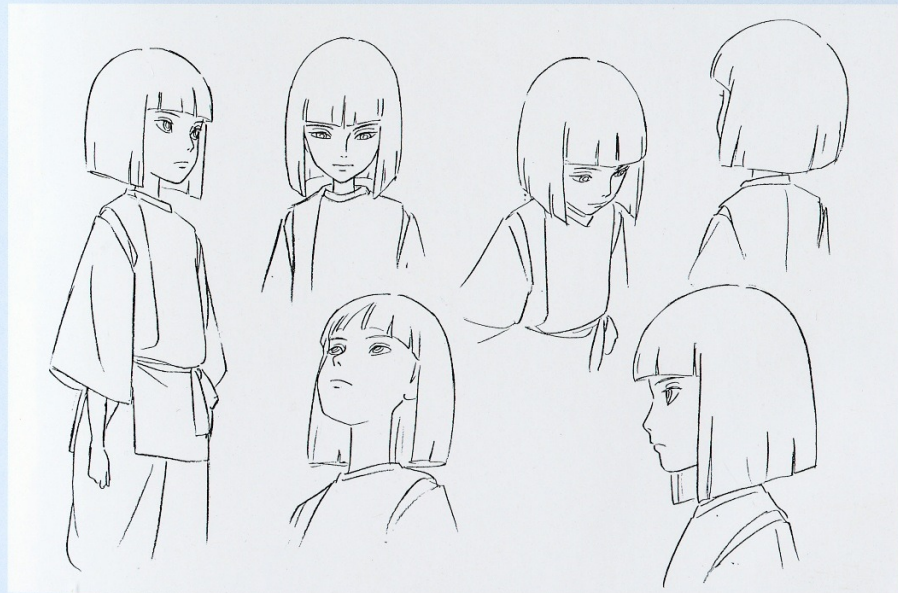

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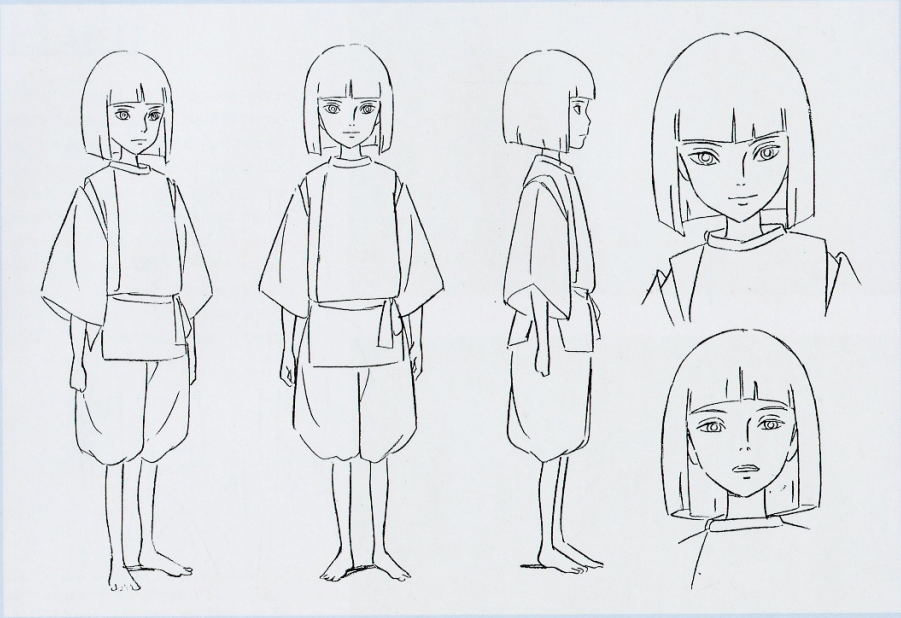

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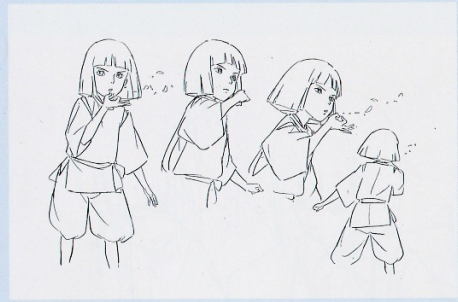

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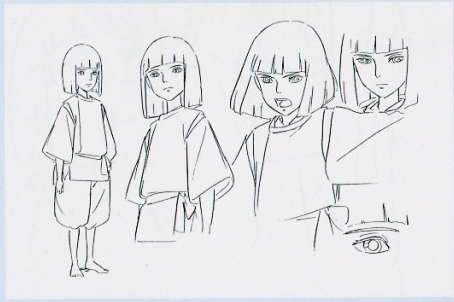

8

*3-8: Pose illustrations including sketches of elegant movements and handsome expressions. (character designs)*
*9: The narrow alley he leads Chihiro into. (background)*

9

# Escape Route

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*1: Haku running quickly, leading Chihiro.*
*2: Dark storage room filled with rows and rows of pickle barrels.*
*3: Food storage room containing giant fish, meat, and birds, scattered, piled all over the concrete floor, or hanging from the ceiling. (background)*
*4: The bath house looming above at night. The deformed beings who cross the bridge, approaching the glowing entrance.*

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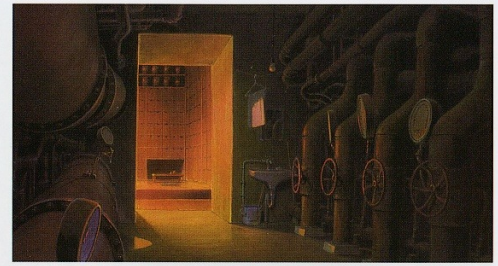
# The Deformed Beings

*1-5: The deformed beings who cross the bridge, heading towards the bath house. Chihiro and Haku pass by No Face.*
*6: Bath house entrance. (background)*
*7: The miniature garden with a pond and ume, orange tree, and bamboo shrubs. (background)*
*8: Haku and Chihiro hiding in the shrubs.*

1





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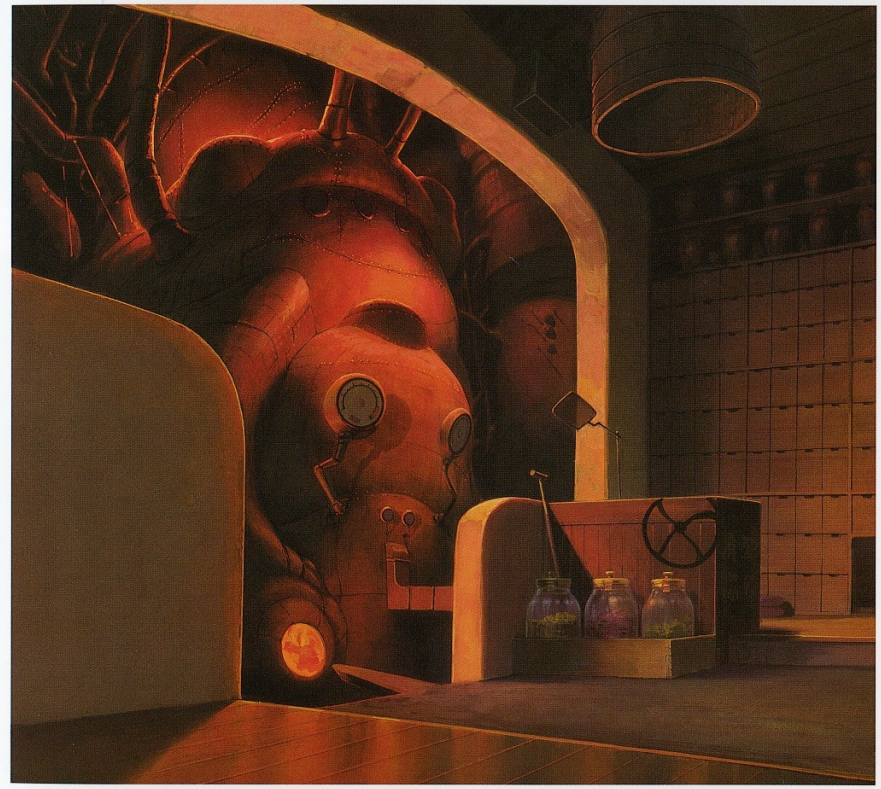

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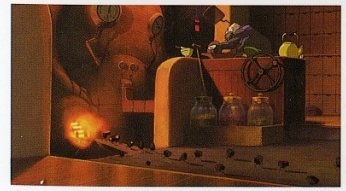
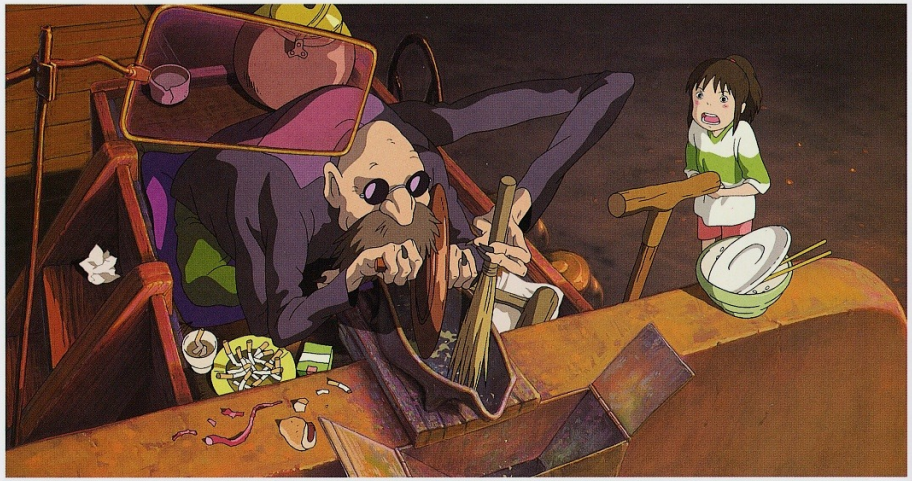


4

# The Boiler Room

*1: The nightless bath house. (background)*
*2: A bright room beyond the dark passage. (background)*
*3-4: The boiler room spits out dark flames as it roars. (background)*



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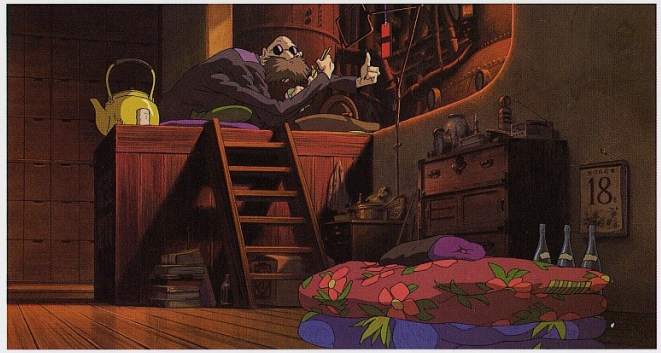
# Kamaji

"At first Kamaji was just a plain old man, but then we came up with the idea of him having a whole set of arms frantically working at once, so by the time we finished the storyboards that's how he looked. His build is more defined than it is in Mr. Miyazaki's sketches. We made him look old by adding old man's wrinkles, like the lines in his neck. Even from behind, at an angle, he looks like an old man." (Ando)

2



3

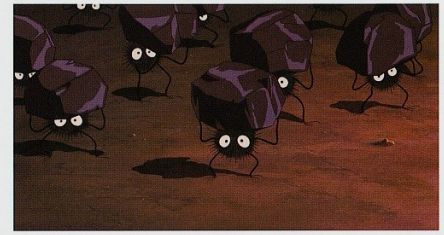
*1-3: The six-armed old man Kamaji who runs the boiler room in the basement of the bath house. He orders the Susuwatari around while preparing herbal soaks.*
*4-9: The Susuwatari help stoke the boiler as they carry the coal in the boiler room. Their favorite food is confetti candy.*



# Susuwatari

4

5



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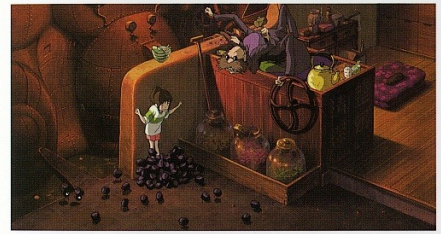

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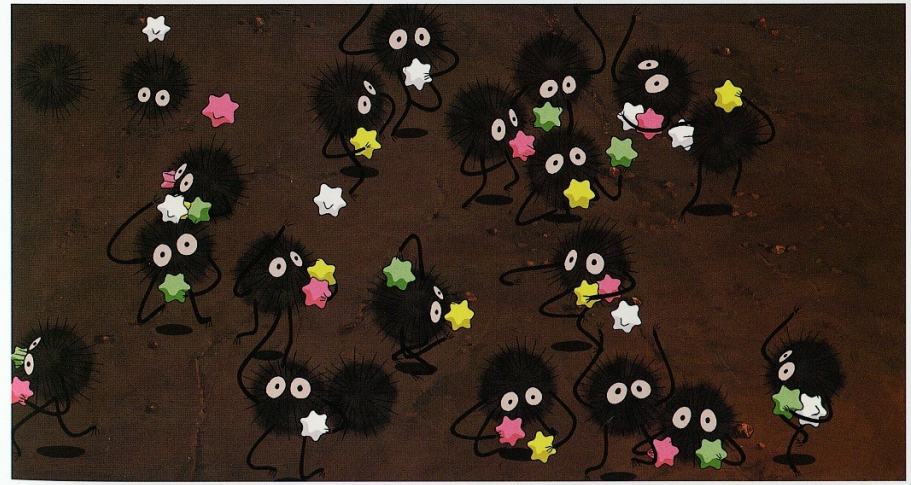


9

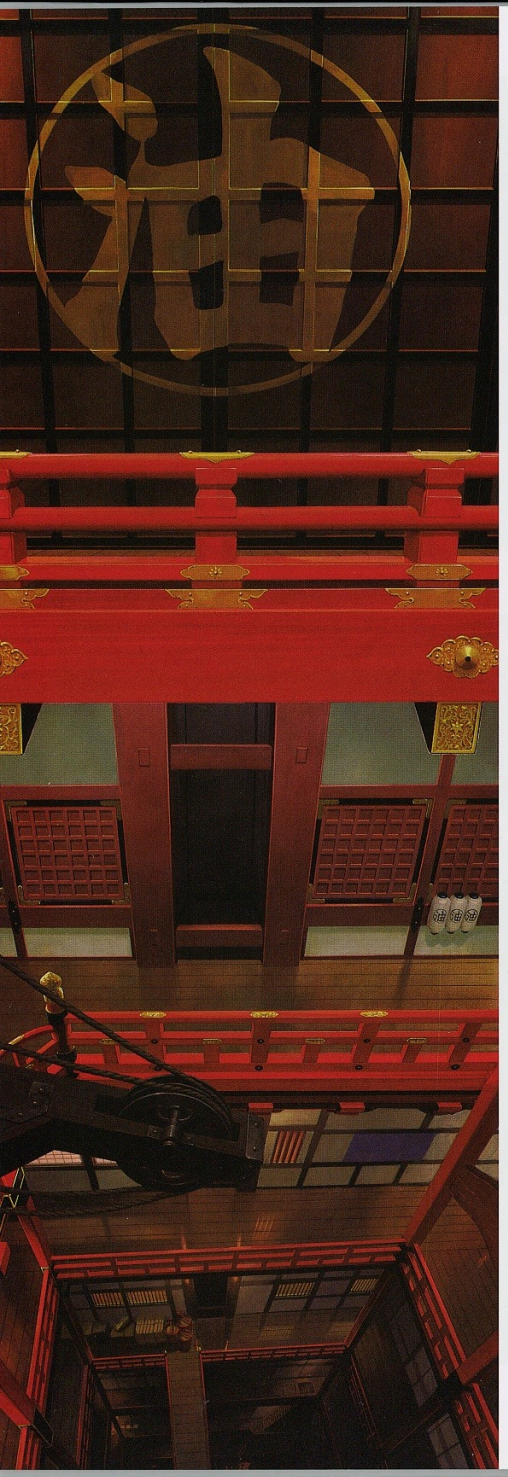
# The Bath House Elevator

## A Mixture of Various Architectural Styles

"I wasn't sure what the director meant when he first told me it was 'a story about a bath house for spirits,' but as the designs came in I realized that this world, including the town and the bath house, had a mixture of various architectural styles. Viewers might feel nostalgic when they see the brick roofs and black, lacquered wooden columns, but these images are also based on the director's personal experience. But the night scene where Haku helps Chihiro was based on the atmosphere of my own hometown. I wanted to make it pitch black. That's one of my favorite scenes.

"The bath house itself is based on an inn at Dogo Hot Springs in Shikoku where we went for a company vacation. Parts of it are also based on Meguro Gajo-en private park* (see editorial note, below) and the Nikko Toshogu shrine. We also based certain sections on features of the Edo-Tokyo Open Air Architectural Museum in Koganei-shi, where we studied the restored buildings from various periods. For example, Kamaji's boiler room and herb drawers were based on this research. The flower patterns painted on the ceiling and sliding doors were based on real paintings in Nijo Castle. We would fill in any parts missing in the director's layout drawings. We had someone who was extremely adept at handling patterns like this, drawing them flawlessly. That meant the other parts had to be equally flawless, so we ended up having to work even harder [laughter], but that's also how we ended up with such wonderful results."
(Takeshige)

**Editorial note: Primarily functioning as a wedding hall, a multi-purpose community space located in the Meguro district of Tokyo. Founded in 1931, its early Showa era architecture has been preserved.*



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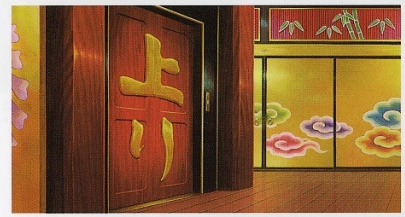

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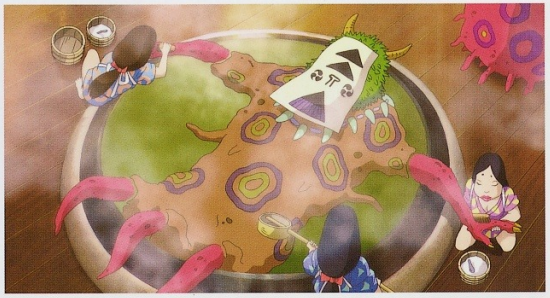
*1-2: The center of the bath house is an atrium. The elevator rises from the dark basement floor. (backgrounds)*
*3-5: Elevator stops for each floor. (4) depicts the deluxe elevator for guests. (backgrounds)*
*6: The pantry where the frog men work. (concept art)*



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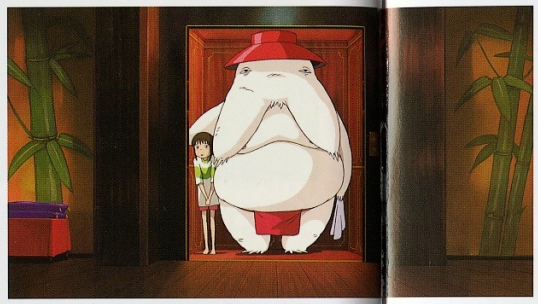

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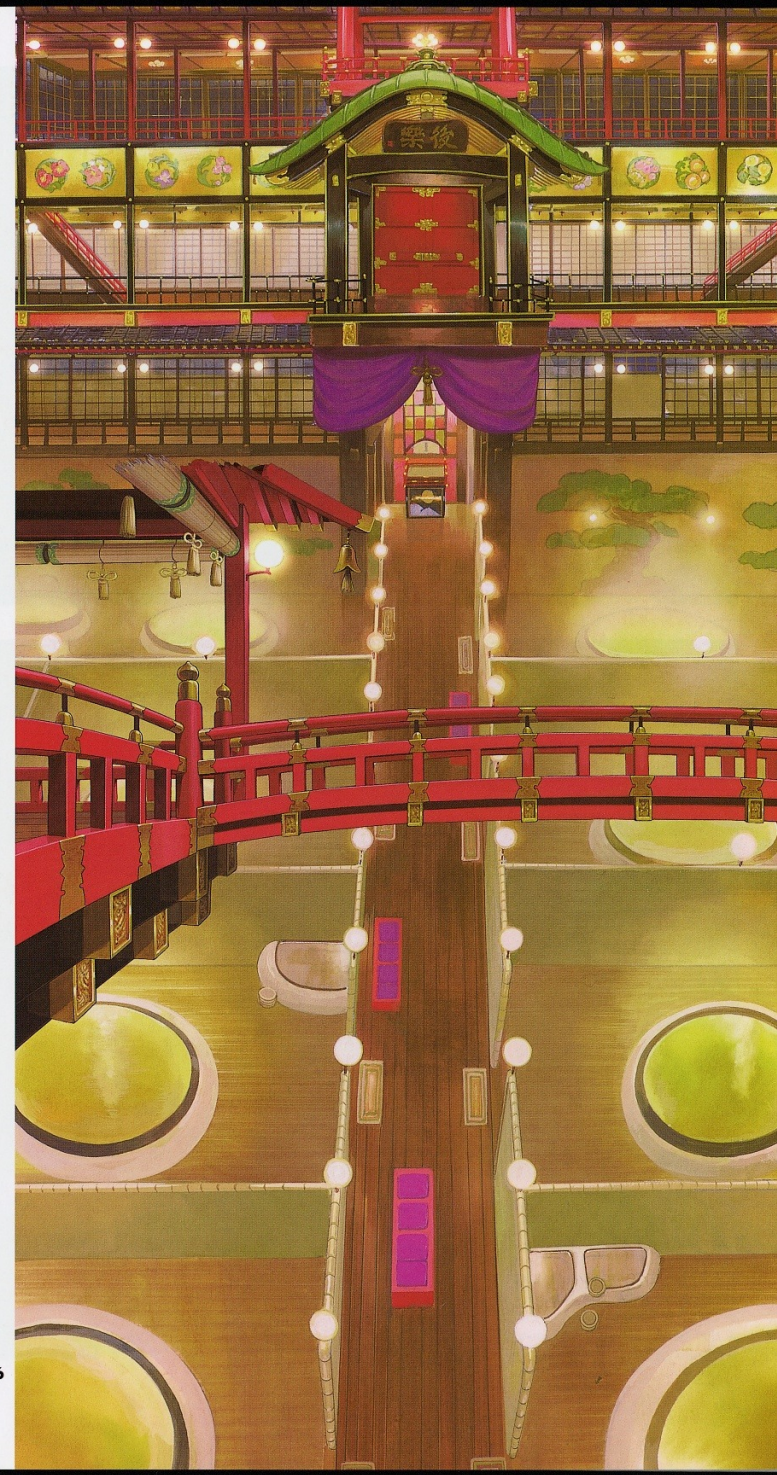
# The Big Bath

All kinds of spirits bathe here.
*1: Ushioni pampered by the Yuna.*
*2: Procession of Otori. Tour guests.*
*3: Ushioni wearing bath house robes.*
*4: Chihiro and the Daikon Radish Spirit.*
*5: The atrium viewed from below. (background)*
*6: Entire view of the bathing quarters, which consist of numerous small baths. (background)*



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# YUBABA'S ROOM-I

*1-2: Ornate, East Asian-style entrance. Giant vases are placed on the gold-plated pedestals. (concept art)*
*3: Cast-metal door knocker that talks.*
*4: Bath house emblem. (background)*
*5-6: Entrance area where the chandelier shines.*

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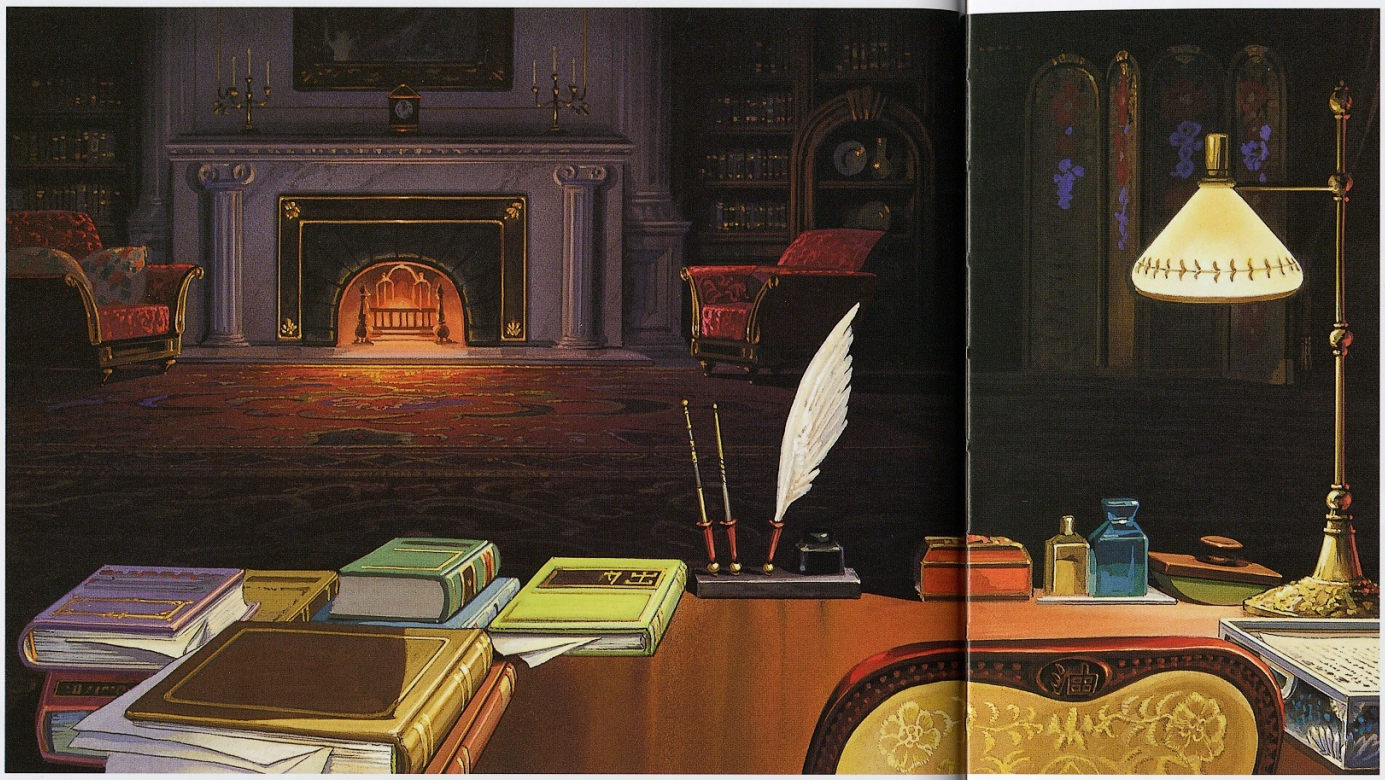
*1: View of room from Yubaba's desk. (background)*
*2: Luxurious carpet. (concept art)*
*3-5: Various room interiors. (backgrounds)*



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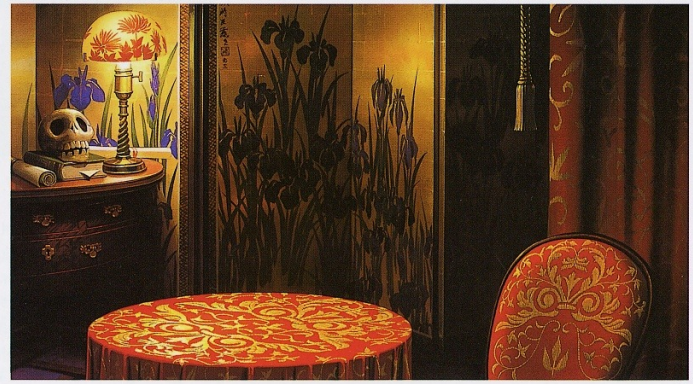

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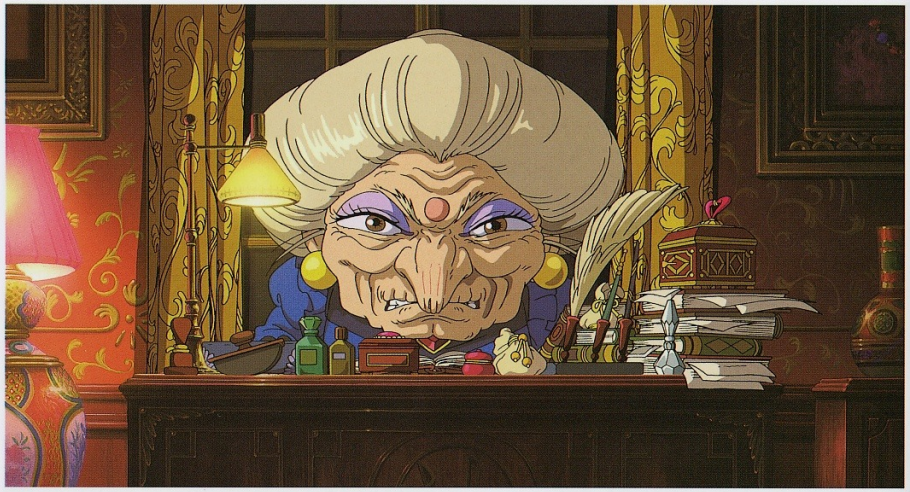

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# YUBABA

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"In our previous project, which ended up being canceled, we had a character with many of the same characteristics as Yubaba. At that point she was drawn as a grotesque character, the kind that might appear in the illustrations of *Alice in Wonderland*. We did this to emphasize the difference in height between her and the heroine. When we began this project, her face started out being large with heavy makeup. At first we had her wearing a Japanese short coat, but given how she lived in a Western-style building, we gave her a more Western look." (Ando)

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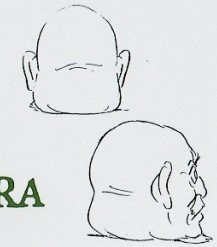
*1-3: The large-headed old woman, Yubaba. She runs the bath house Aburaya. She is sharp-tongued and greedy.*
*4-6: Pose illustrations of Yubaba. (character designs)*
*7-10: Yubaba uses all kinds of sorcery. She can shut someone's mouth like a zipper, light her fingertip like a lighter, or move things with her will.*
*11-12: The trio of bald men's heads (Kashira) in Yubaba's room. (character design)*

# KASHIRA



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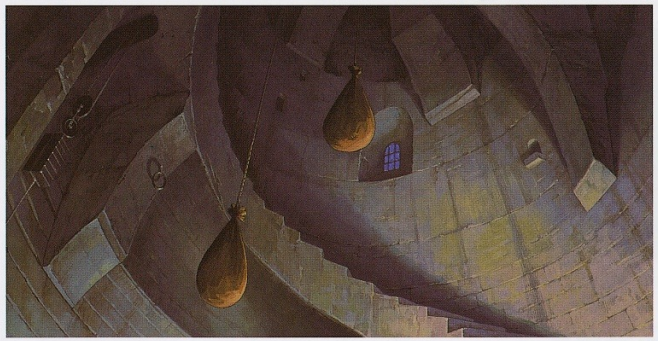

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*1: Barracks added to the outside walls of the bath house. This is where the Yuna and the frog men live. (concept art)*
*2: Spiral stairs of the atrium. (background)*
*3: The ghost train running under the barracks.*
*4-5: The pale dawn. The morning fog comes rolling in.*

# Pale Dawn

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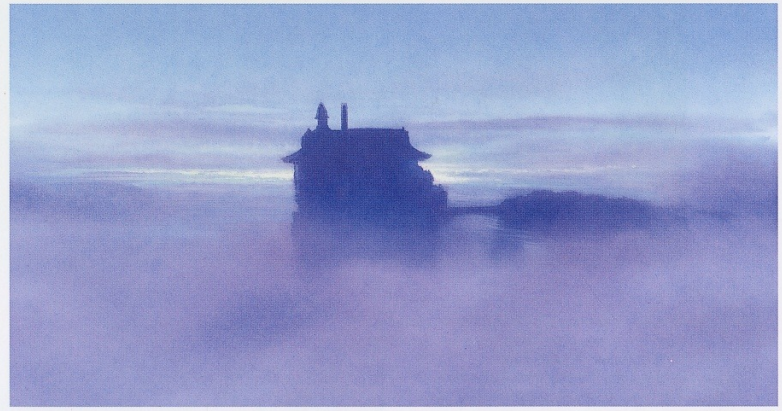

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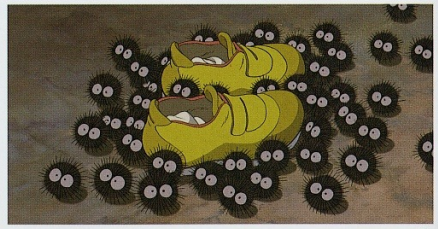

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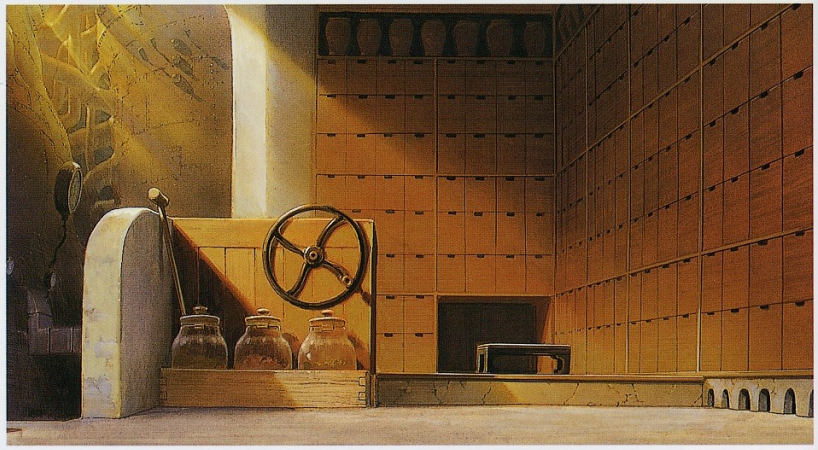

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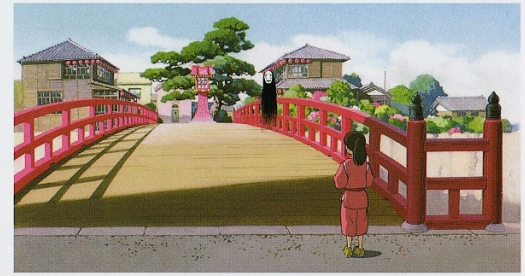
*1: Chihiro waves back to the Susuwatari seeing her off. She is wearing a* suikan *outfit (commoners' clothes that later became hunting clothes for aristocrats).*
*2: Susuwatari bringing Chihiro's shoes.*
*3-4: Boiler room with sunlight pouring in.*



# No Face

"No Face is basically expressionless, but I ended up adding just a tiny bit of expression. It might have been better to make his mask more Noh-like without any expression at all, conveying his expressions by lighting. No Face swallows the bath house workers, and I thought it might have been interesting if he acquired their personalities and ability to reason. This way he might become more human and appealing." (Ando)



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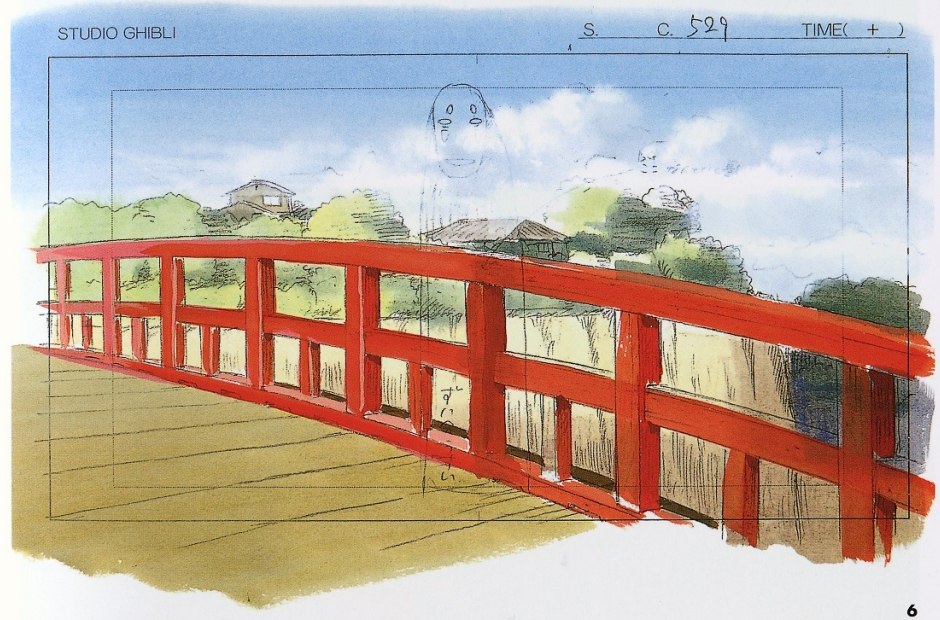


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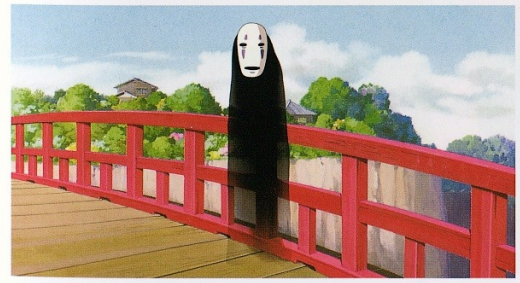

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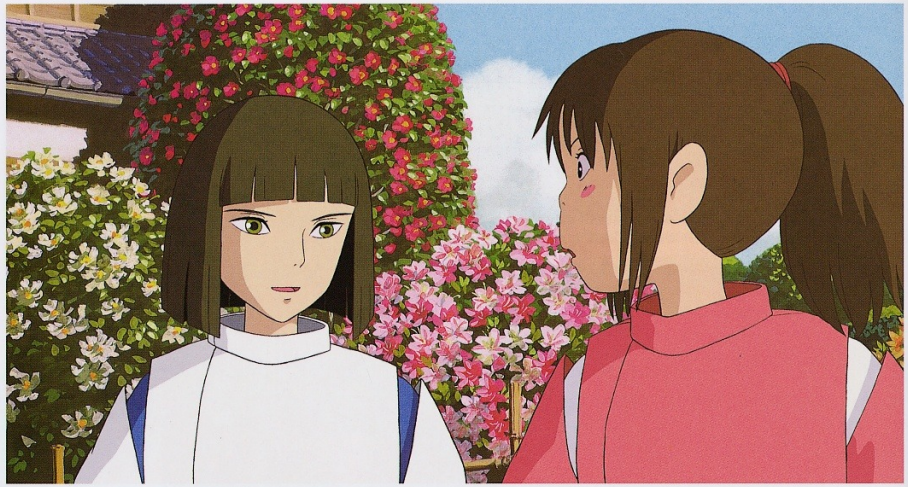
*5: As she reaches the foot of the bridge, Chihiro notices a masked shadow in the middle of the bridge under the sunlight.*
*6-7: The mysterious being, No Face, who comes from another world. (concept art)*



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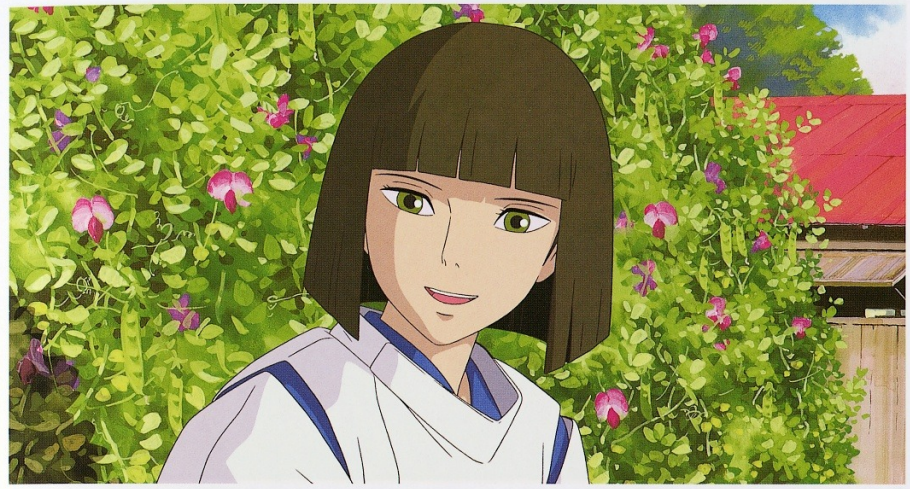
*1-3: Chihiro walking between the blooming trees, following Haku.*
*4: Pigsty seen from the cliff.*
*5-8: Chihiro eating a rice ball blessed by Haku to reinvigorate her.*

# HAKU'S RICE BALL





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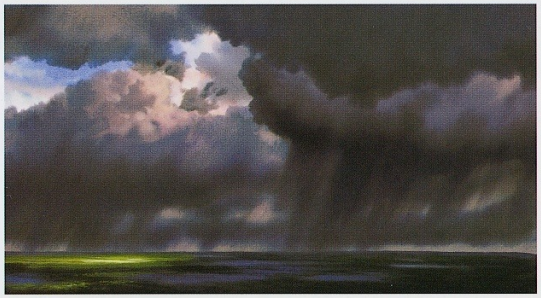
# Rainy Evening



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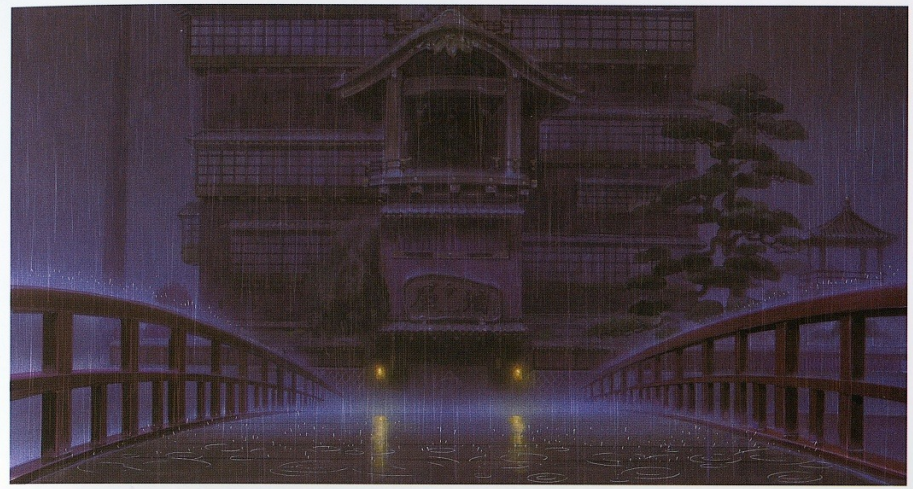

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*1: The bath house closed at night in the storm.*
*2: The clouds drift and the rain moves to the fields.*
*3: Yubaba and Yu-Bird fly right above the marsh.*
*4: The rain beating against the bridge. The entrance lamp is still lit.*
*5: The lamps are lit and the workers rise.*

***On her first day of work at the bath house, Chihiro and her superior Lin are assigned the daunting task of cleaning the filthy big tub. The reeking Stink Spirit (who is in fact a river spirit) appears. The river spirit is delighted with Chihiro. Yubaba is overjoyed too from all the gold nuggets she's accumulated. But then No Face whom Chihiro mistakenly invited in begins to act strangely....***

# SEN [CHIHIRO]

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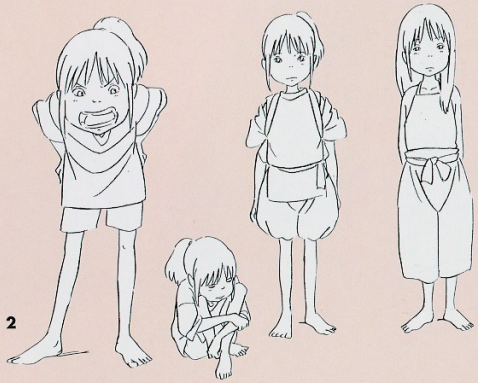

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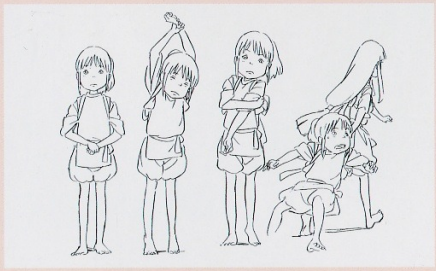

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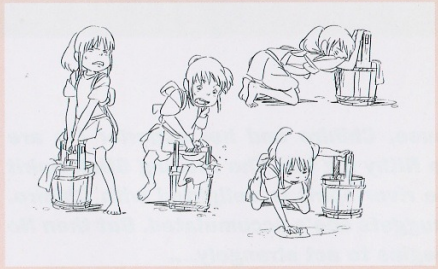

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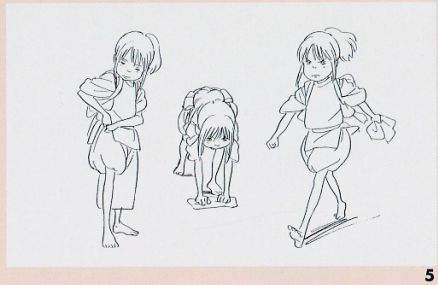

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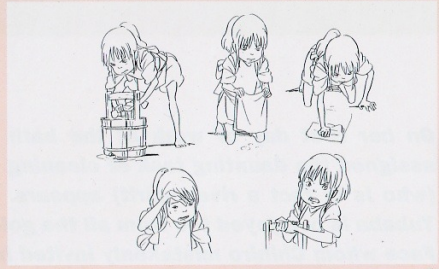

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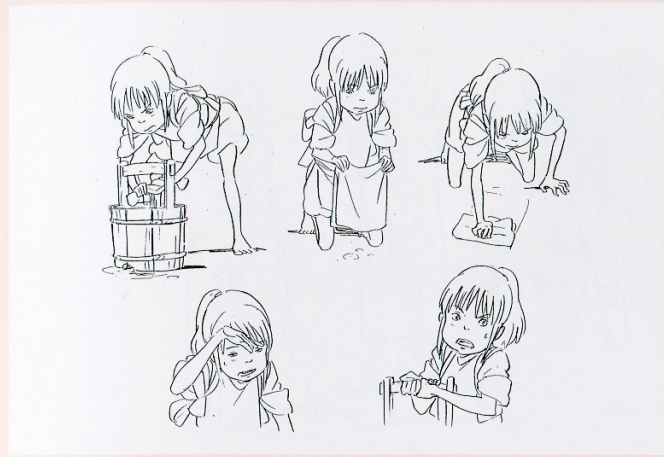

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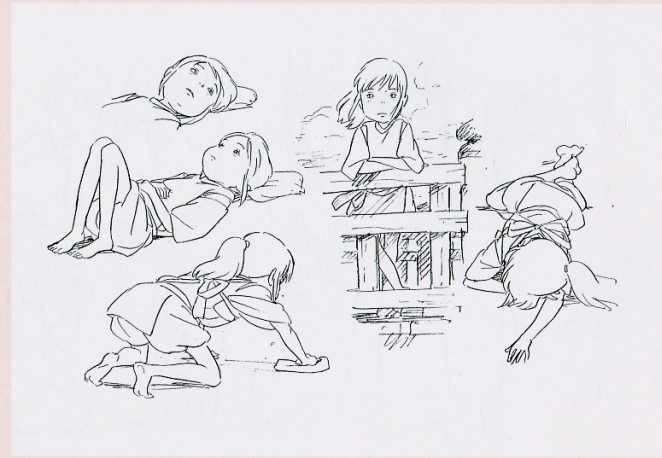

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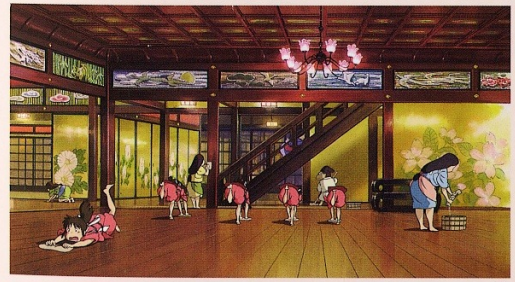

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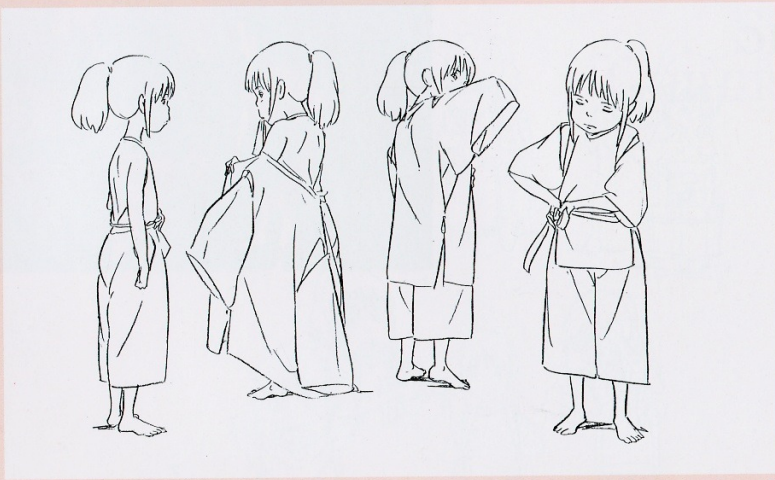
*1: Supervised by Lin, Chihiro works hard at cleaning.*
*2-8: Pose illustrations for Chihiro, who has become Sen after signing her contract with Yubaba. (character designs)*
*9: Wiping the floors of the large hall, Chihiro falls.*



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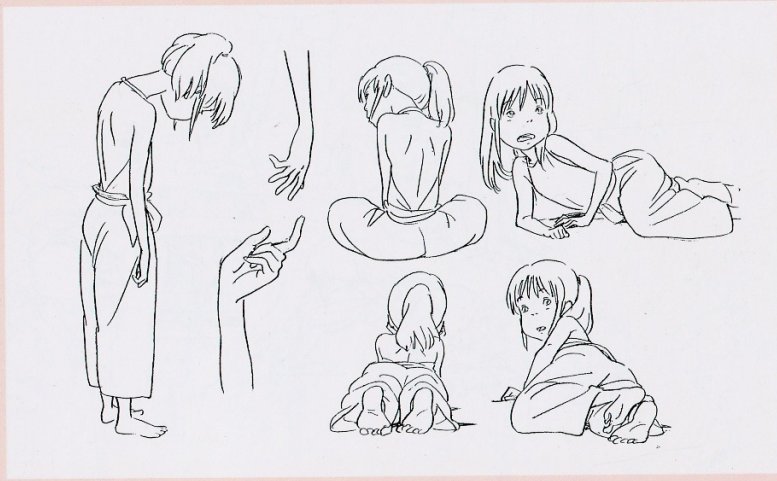

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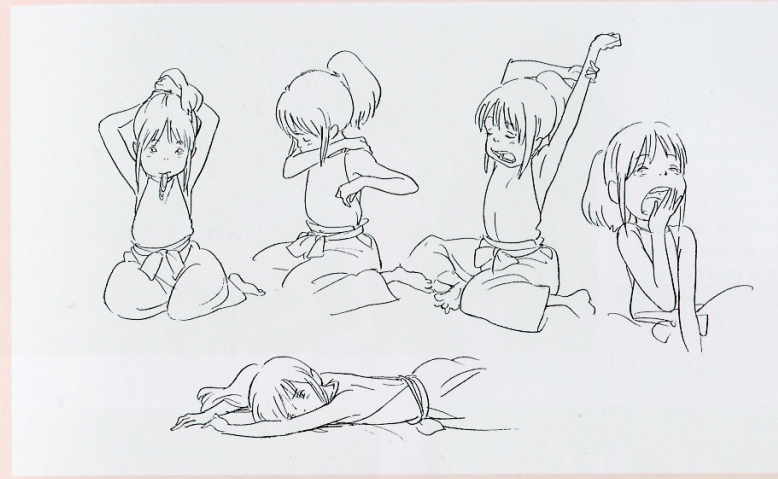
*1, 2, 4-6: Costume and pose illustrations for Sen. Underwear is bareback camisole. (5) is a pose study for tucking up her sleeves with a sash. (character designs)*
*3: Chihiro washing the filthy big tub.*





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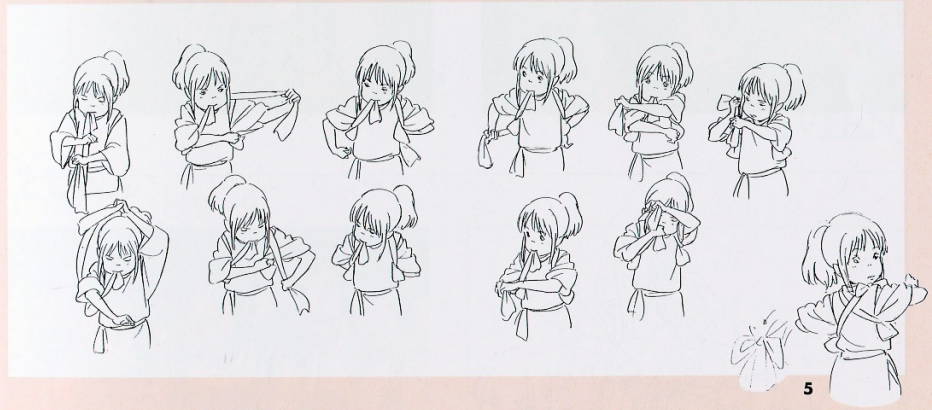

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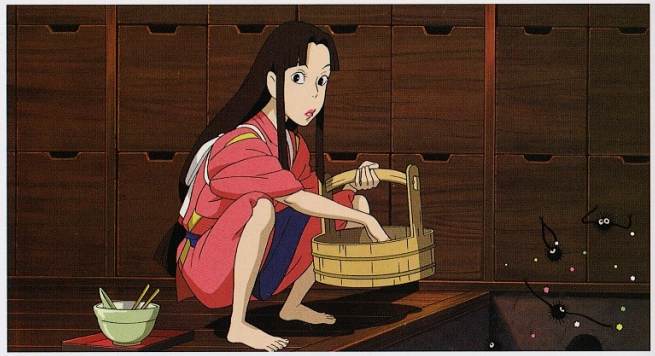
"I drew these in case there might be a scene where Chihiro tucks up her sleeves with a sash. Because I wasn't familiar with the exact tying method, I had to approximate it." (Ando)

# Lin

"We first came up with the idea of Lin actually being a transformed weasel or sable. Her eyes and mouth were so large, they almost stretched beyond the outlines of her face. In the end, we had her look like an average woman on the tall side. She didn't have a long face in the designs. Mr. Miyazaki elongated her face." (Ando)



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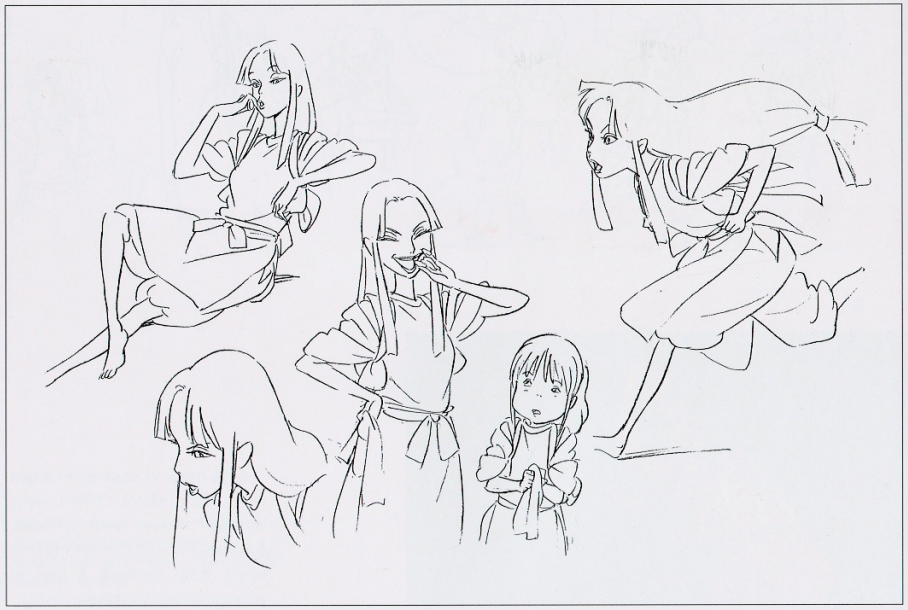

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# The Frog Men

# Yuna

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*1-3: Lin, who is assigned to supervise Chihiro.*
*4: Pose illustrations of Lin. (character design)*
*5-7: Frog men who work at the bath house. (5) depicts Chichiyaku and Aniyaku, the company manager and assistant manager. (7) depicts the foreman frog.*
*8: Pose illustrations of cooks. (character design)*
*9: The bath house women annoyed at the sudden appearance of the human Chihiro.*
*10-11: Pose illustrations of the Yuna (the women workers). (character designs)*

# WORKERS' QUARTERS

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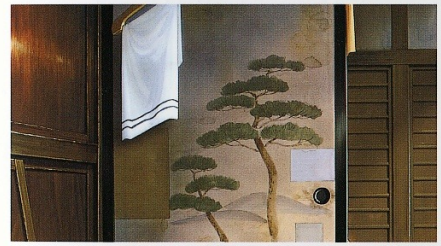

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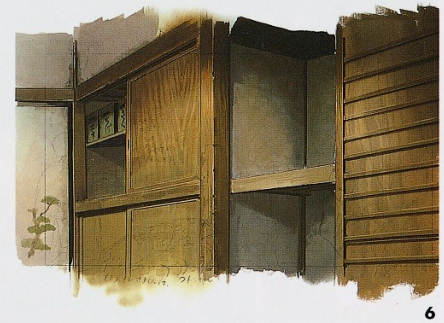

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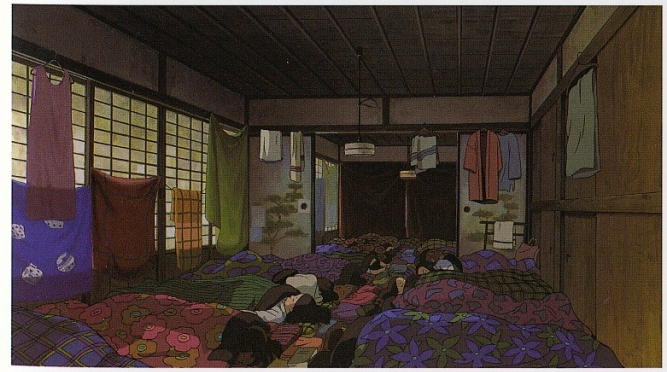

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*1: The bath house workers' living quarters for the frog men and Yuna.*
*2: The reception desk area where Chichiyaku and Aniyaku supervise the workers. (background)*
*3: Job board of workers' task cards. Workers flip over cards as they take on assignments. (concept art)*
*4: Women's lodgings for Chihiro and Lin. (concept art)*
*5: The sliding door area of the women's quarters, where Haku suddenly appears. (background)*
*6: Futon shelf in the women's quarters. (concept art)*
*7: Women's quarters at early morning.*

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# Bathing Quarters

*1: The bathing quarters of the bath house. Because certain shots pan down from the large ceiling to the baths, it is drawn in perspective. (background)*
*2: Small baths divided according to herbal soaks. (concept art)*
*3: View of bathing quarters in perspective. (background)*
*4: Entrance area to large bath. (background)*

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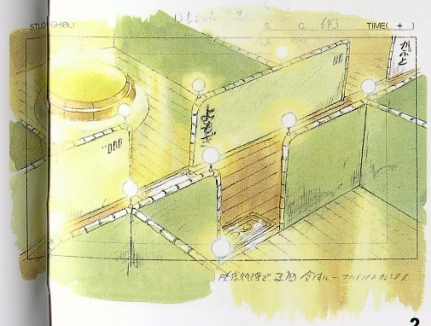

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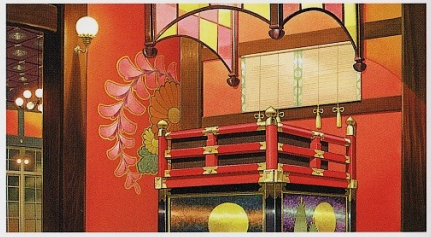

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*1: The corridors around the atrium above the bathing quarters. Detailed paintings on the ceiling as well as the walls and sliding doors. (background)*
*2: Watch-stand area where Chihiro requests an herb-soak token. The foreman frog sits at the watch-stand, welcoming guests. (background)*
*3: Near stairs for corridor in (1). Appears in the scene where Yubaba gazes down to observe Chihiro's work. (background)*
*4: The bath house entrance area where the Stink Spirit appears. (concept art)*
*5: The elevator stop area where Chihiro rides the elevator to reach Yubaba's room. (concept art)*





## Aiming for high-quality art

"It was quite a challenge to handle new locations and landscapes emerging from every new storyboard layout provided by the director. Also, because the entire film was processed digitally, we had to work even harder to paint natural-looking backgrounds that could tolerate digital processing. It wasn't as if we were altering our painting style to suit the digital processes of shooting and compositing. What we had to do instead was come up with high-quality material that could endure any kind of processing. This will be crucial in the art of future Ghibli films. The CG department and camera department will have to collaborate closely. I can only say I did my best. By and large, these were the issues I had to confront in making this film.
"Personally speaking, for a while I had a very hard time drawing the concept art. Maybe I was too exhausted from the previous film, *My Neighbors the Yamadas* [laughter], it took a long time for me to get back into work…I had such a hard time, some days I would wake up drenched in sweat. I was given a week's leave, so I drove to the locations Mr. Miyazaki and Masashi Ando had scouted and returned with sketches. That was how I recovered [laughter]. Noboru Yoshida who became my assistant helped me out until I commenced work. I somehow managed, but I'm not sure how successful I was as the art director. Now it's up to the viewers to decide." (Takeshige)

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# SEN & NO FACE

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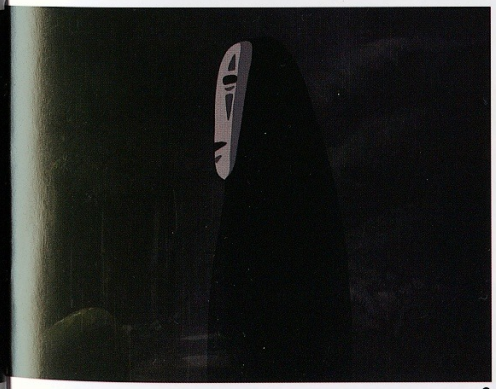

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*1-3: Sen lets No Face in from the garden.*
*4-7: No Face who wants to please Sen and offers the herbal soak token he stole from the watch-stand, but...*

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# The Stink Spirit Arrives

*1: Window of Yubaba's palace. Appears when Yubaba detects the Stink Spirit's visit. (background)*
*2: The bridge in front of the bath house where the frog men try to stop the Stink Spirit. (concept art)*
*3: Bath house entrance. Shoe-drying stone at the entrance. (background)*
*4-10: Chihiro and Lin struggle to welcome the Stink Spirit.*

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*1-7: Yubaba supervises the workers gathered to clean up the Stink Spirit's waste. The Stink Spirit turns out to be a river spirit with the face of an old man.*
*8: Pile of garbage gushing out of the Stink Spirit's body. (background)*
*9-13: After regaining his true appearance, the river spirit leaves behind a heap of gold nuggets and a blessed dumpling for Chihiro in gratitude.*

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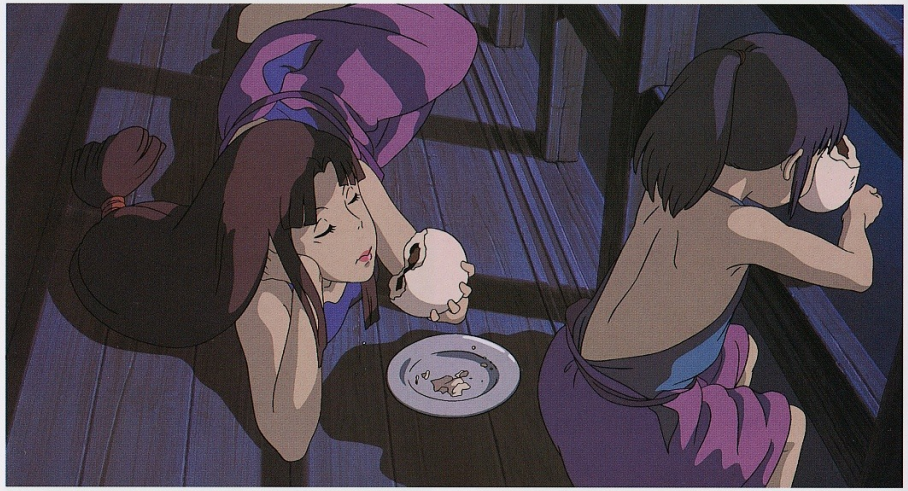

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# That Night...

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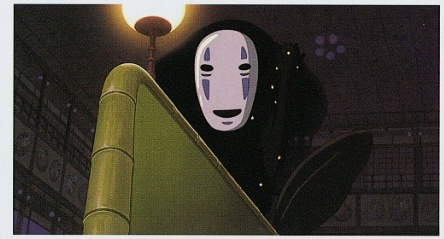

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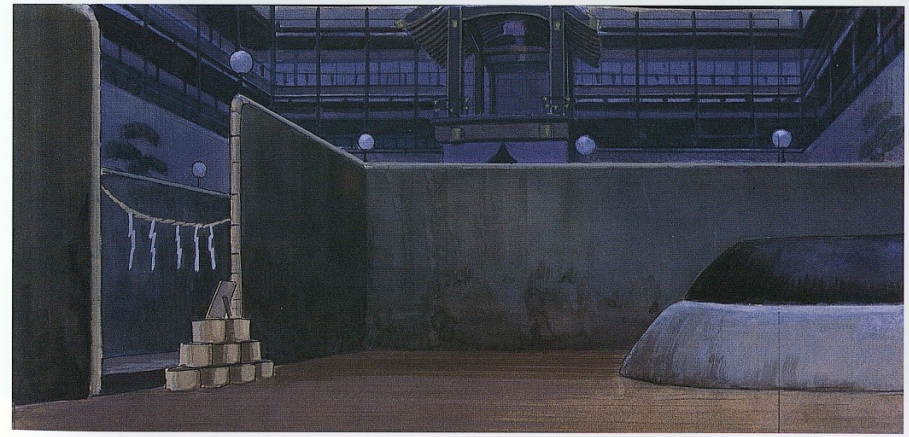

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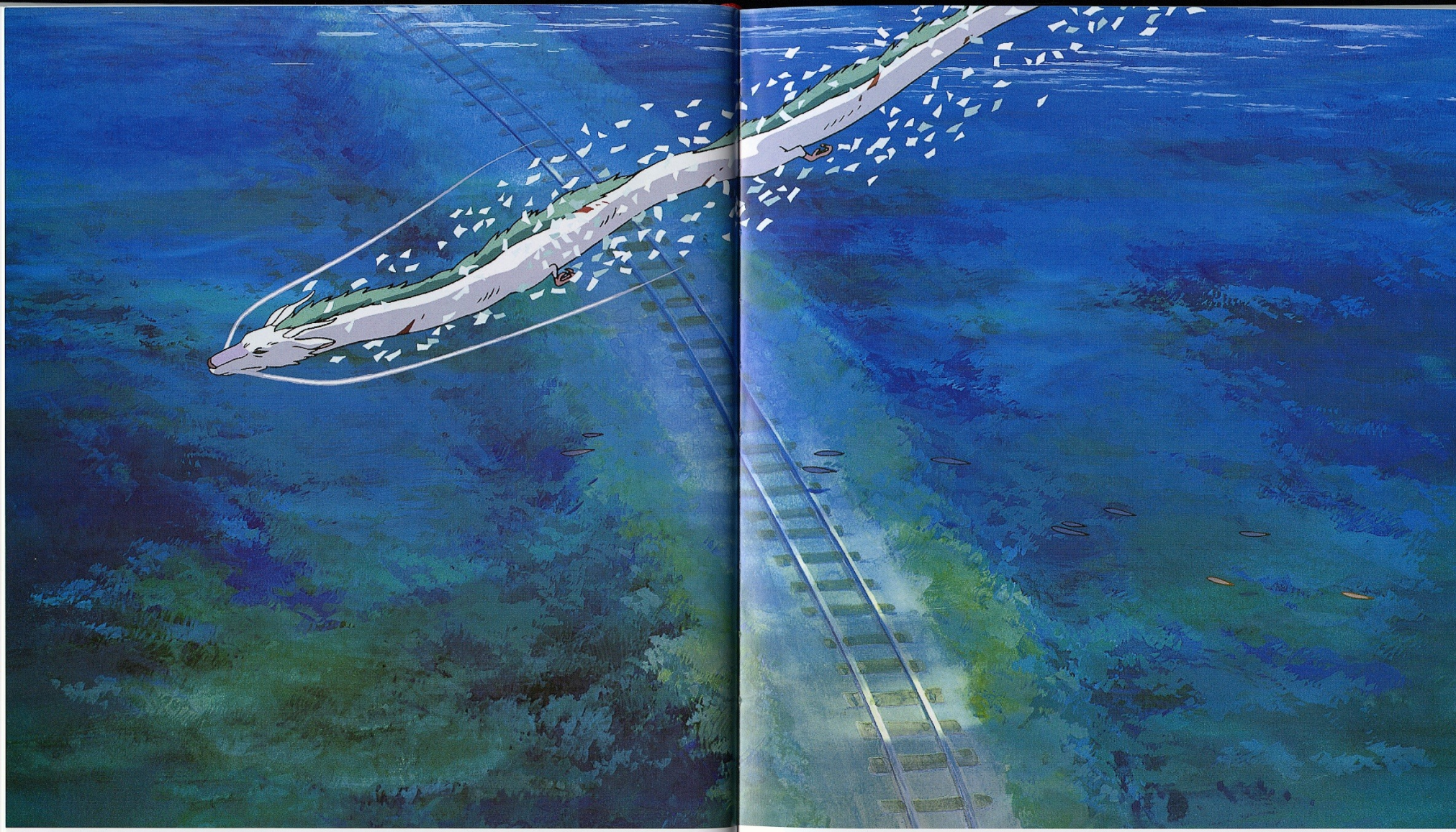
*1-3: After a full day's work, Lin shares steam buns with Chihiro.*
*4: Early morning, the hall of the rest area where Little Green Frog shows up.*
*5-7: No Face lures Little Green Frog in and swallows him. He also offers a deposit for a meal and a bath to Aniyaku, who subsequently appears.*
*8: The big tub where Little Green Frog and Aniyaku encounter No Face. (concept art)*



***At daybreak, Chihiro wakes up, but the other workers have all gone to take care of No Face. Left alone in her room, Chihiro worries about her parents. Suddenly a wounded dragon appears, seeking shelter in her room. She intuitively knows it's Haku transformed into a dragon. She chases after him to the top of the building up to Yubaba's room. Meanwhile, upset that Chihiro hasn't appeared yet, No Face goes on a rampage!***

# The Wounded Dragon

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*1: The pigsty on the cliff seen from a bath house window. Haku takes Chihiro there so she can meet her parents. The rhododendron shrubs and the bean field where Haku offers her his rice balls are located here too. (background)*
*2-9: As Chihiro thinks about her parents, suddenly a white dragon, attacked by human-shaped paper planes, escapes into her room. Chihiro can tell it is Haku.*

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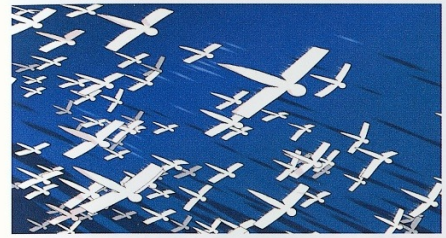

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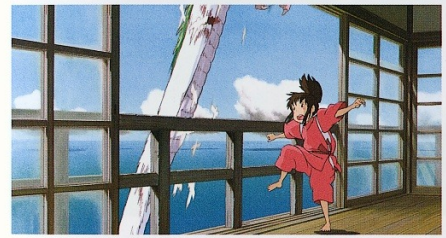

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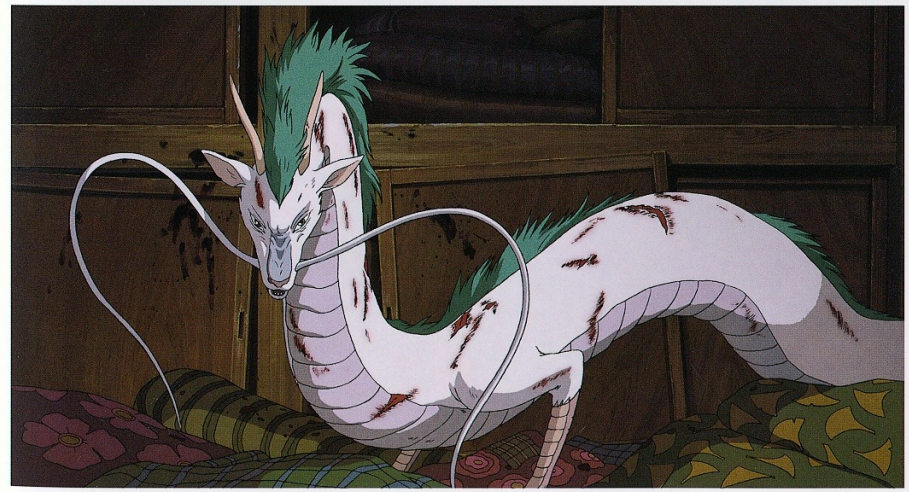

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# No Face's Big Party

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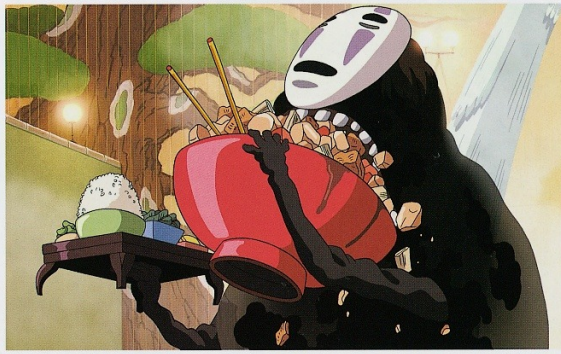

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*1-10: All the workers at the bath house rush to entertain No Face, clamoring for a share of the gold nuggets. In a frantic rush to help the dragon in Yubaba's room, Chihiro rejects No Face's offer of gold nuggets. The stunned No Face swallows other servile workers including Aniyaku, the assistant manager.*

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# To The Baby Room

*1: Giving up on the stairs, Chihiro climbs up the outside wall as she sees Yubaba returning from her flight.*
*2: External wall of bath house. The barrack below the small windows is tin roofed. (background)*
*3-4: Same external wall of bath house. (background)*
*5: Chihiro reaches Baby's room, which is filled with pillows and toys. (background)*

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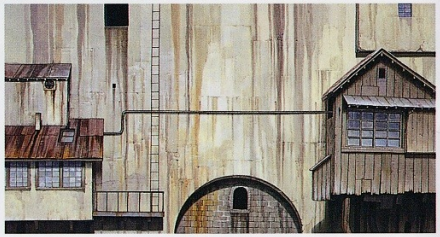

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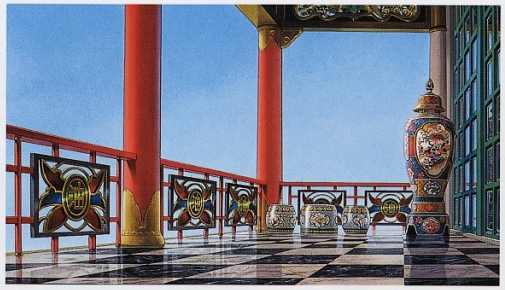
# YUBABA'S ROOM-II



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*1: Terrace on the top floor of the bath house. In the shape of a bat, Yubaba returns from her mysterious flight and lands in her room. (background)*
*2: Yubaba's office. Chihiro first meets Yubaba here. Chihiro runs into this room to help the dragon. The noon light pours through the window on the left. (background)*
*3: Corridor of mirrors. It connects the bathroom Chihiro climbs into, Baby's room, and Yubaba's office. (background)*
*4-5: Book shelves and sofa seats in the office. Appears when Chihiro and Yubaba discuss the dragon. Also appears when the Kashira, transformed into Baby, chases Baby Mouse. (backgrounds)*

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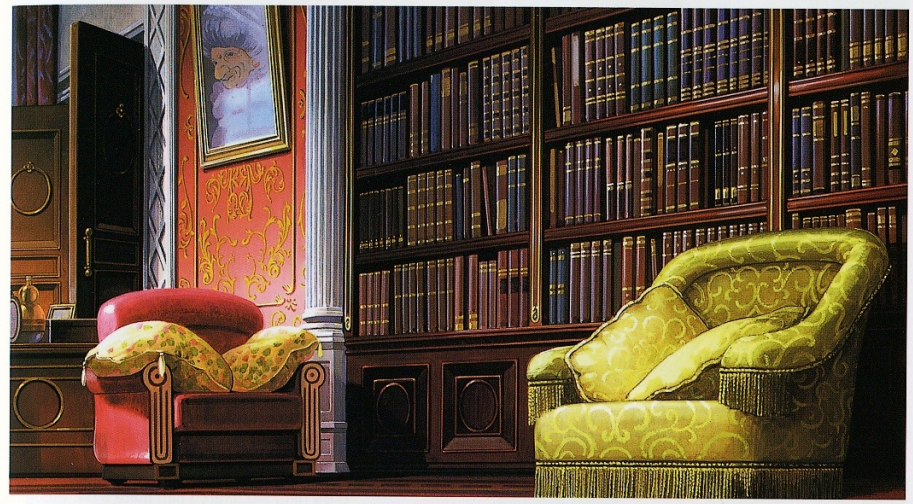

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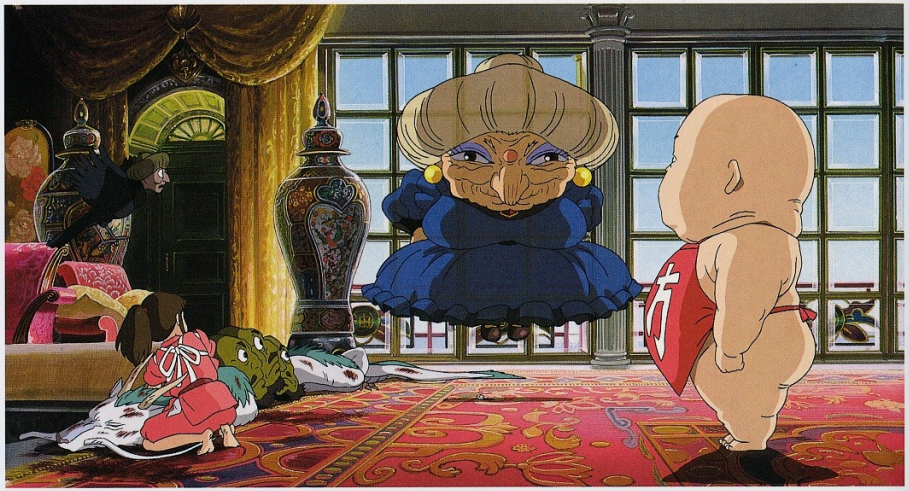

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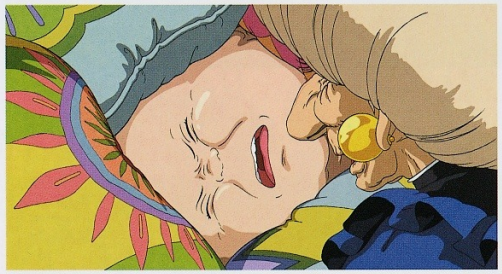

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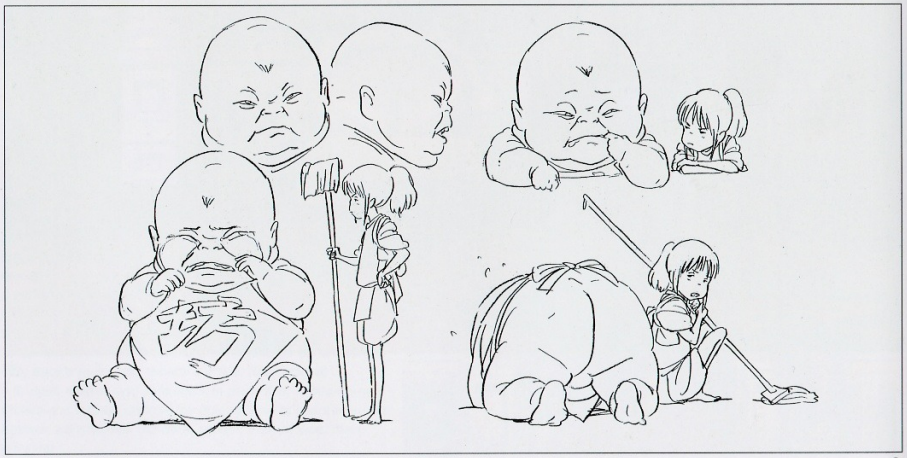
## Baby

"Baby had a grotesque look when we first drew him. We altered him quite a bit, though, by the time we were working on the storyboards. He was supposed to share the characteristics of both an adult and a baby, but he ended up being a baby in the film. We originally talked about Yubaba being the Yu-Bird. I imagined Yu-Bird circling around Yubaba all the time, so that's how I drew it for the designs." (Ando)



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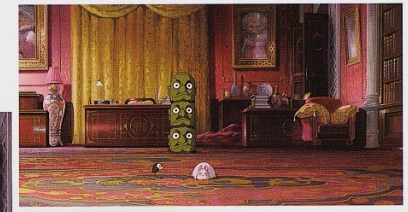

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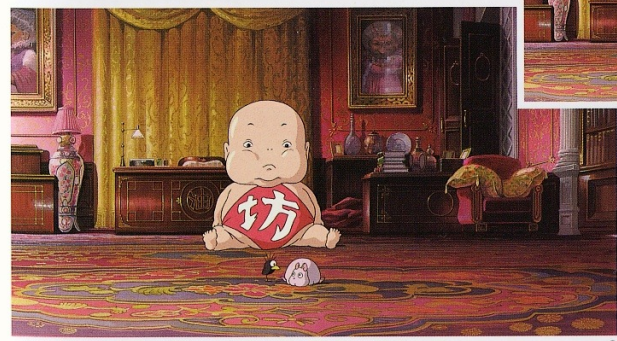

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*1: Pursuing the dragon, Zeniba suddenly appears.*
*2: The overprotective Yubaba has pampered her baby, spoiling him.*
*3: Pose illustrations of relative scale between Baby and Chihiro. (character designs)*
*4: Pose illustrations. (character designs)*
*5-8: Zeniba transforms Kashira into Baby, and Baby and Yu-Bird into little animals.*

# Haku The Dragon

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"I thought Haku would be more compelling if he was cold and mysterious, so at first he looked grotesque as a dragon. I drew him as a snakelike dragon with reptilian scales, but it turned out this wasn't what Mr. Miyazaki's had in mind. The final version of the dragon ended up having a more canine quality. It has a dog's face." (Ando)

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*1, 6, 9: Chihiro does her best to pacify the dragon writhing in pain.*
*2, 7, 8: Pose and relative-scale drawings of Chihiro and dragon. (character designs)*
*3-5: Chihiro clutches onto the dragon as they fall into the dark hole towards the bottom infested with strange creatures.*

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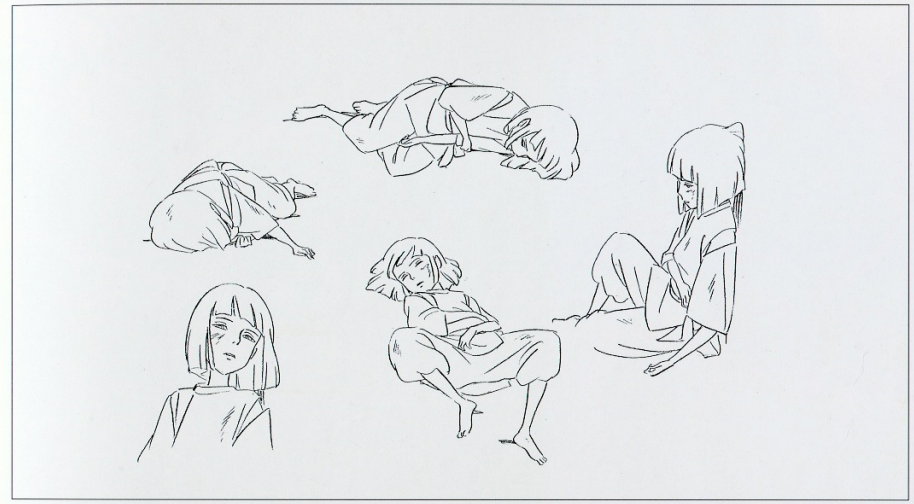
*1-3: Chihiro, Baby Mouse, and Fly Bird (Yu-Bird) crash through the boiler room ceiling and fall on the ground. After Chihiro feeds the river spirit's dumpling to the dragon, he spits out Zeniba's precious seal and the black slug cursed by Yubaba.*
*4-8: After crushing the black slug, Chihiro has Kamaji chop between her hands to prevent the curse from spreading to her. She then nurses Haku who has regained his true appearance.*
*9: Haku injured. (character design)*
*10-11: Baby Mouse imitates Chihiro having her curse chopped out. The Susuwatari gawk at him in admiration.*
*12-13: After Chihiro insists she must return the seal to Zeniba, Kamaji offers her a set of train tickets.*



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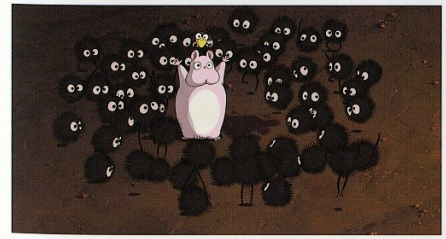

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*1: Chihiro enters the room to pacify No Face's rampage. He is devastated when she tells him, "You could never give me what I want." She offers him the remains of the river spirit's dumpling, which she had intended to share with her parents.*
*2-3: The sliding doors on the inside and outside of No Face's room. (backgrounds)*

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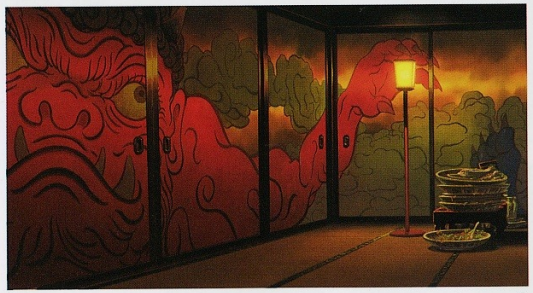

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# No Face Runs Amok

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*1-19: After eating the river spirit's dumpling, No Face writhes in pain. The enraged No Face frantically chases after Chihiro. Yubaba's light ball is powerless against No Face, who covers her with sludge. But after crashing against the wall, the exhausted No Face spits out Aniyaku and the Yuna he had swallowed.*

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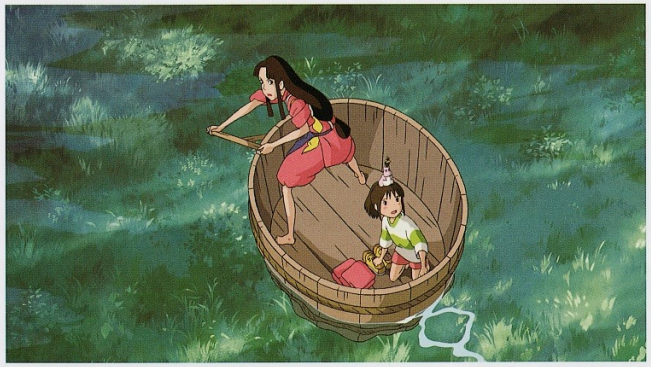
# Following The Rails



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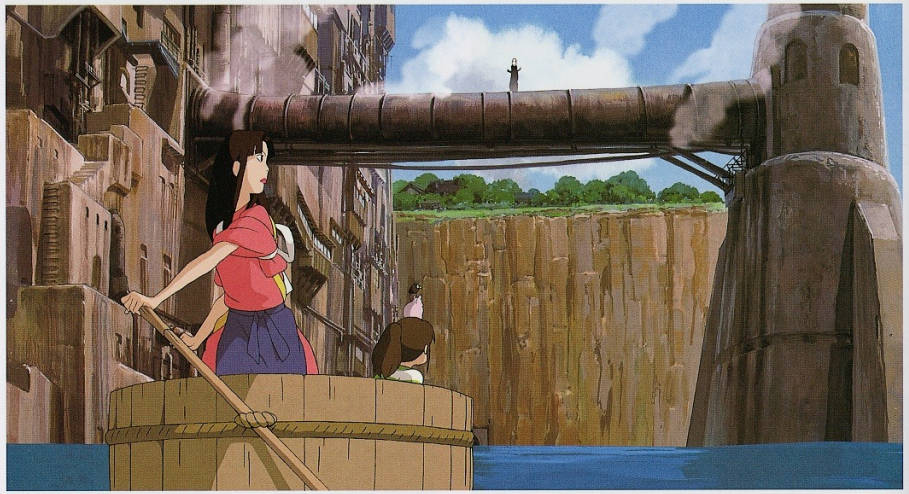

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*1-6: Lin rows the tub boat which will take Chihiro, Baby Mouse, and Fly Bird to the train stop. Lin warns No Face, who tags along, "If you put even one scratch on that girl, you're in big trouble!" But No Face is harmless now, returning to his former lonely, quiet self.*

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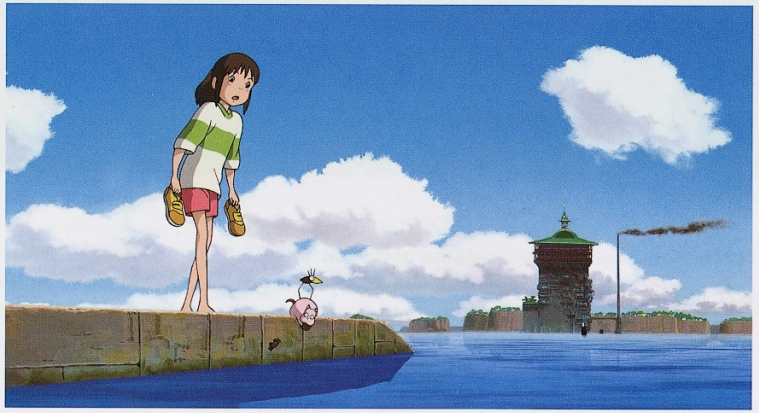

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*Chihiro leads No Face and the others onto the train as she heads towards Swamp Bottom station, where Zeniba is said to live. The train carries shadowlike passengers, as it passes by numerous stations, moving through the vast sea. Night falls and the group finally arrives at their destination. Guided by the lantern, they approach Zeniba's house. Chihiro wants Zeniba to forgive Haku for his crime and lift Zeniba's curses on Baby and the others.*

# Sea Railway

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*1-2: As it emerges from the direction of the bath house, the sea railway train arrives at the platform in the sea. According to Kamaji, the train doesn't return.*
*3: The train conductor silently points at No Face to ask whether he is joining them. It turns out she has the exact number of tickets they need.*
*4-5: Chihiro, her friends, and the other passengers ride the single railway train through the sea.*

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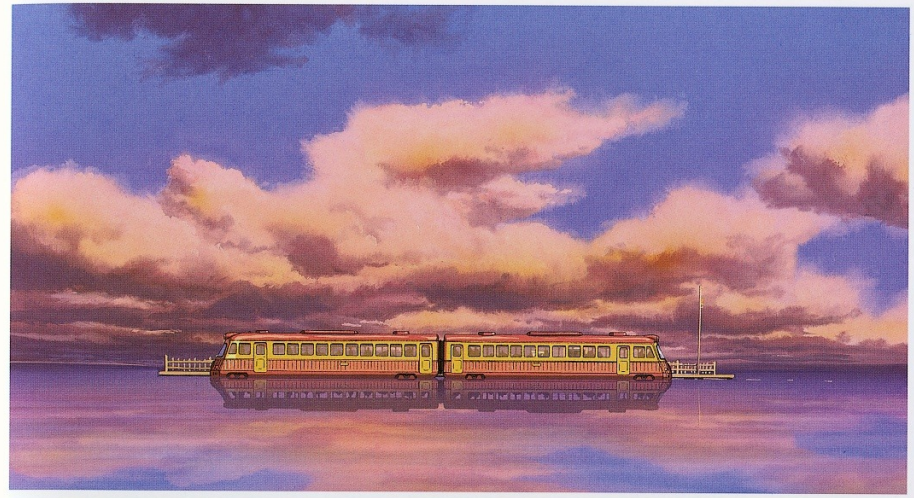
*1-2, 4-5: Various views from the train. Reddish clouds under the setting sun evoke the passing of time into evening.*
*3: Invited by Chihiro, No Face timidly sits beside her.*
*6-7: The shadowlike passengers get off at various stops on the way. Chihiro and her friends are the only passengers left inside the train. Now the evening's grown dark as the bright neon lights pass by them.*





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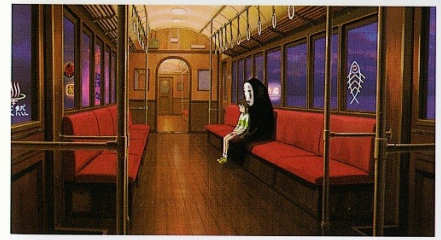

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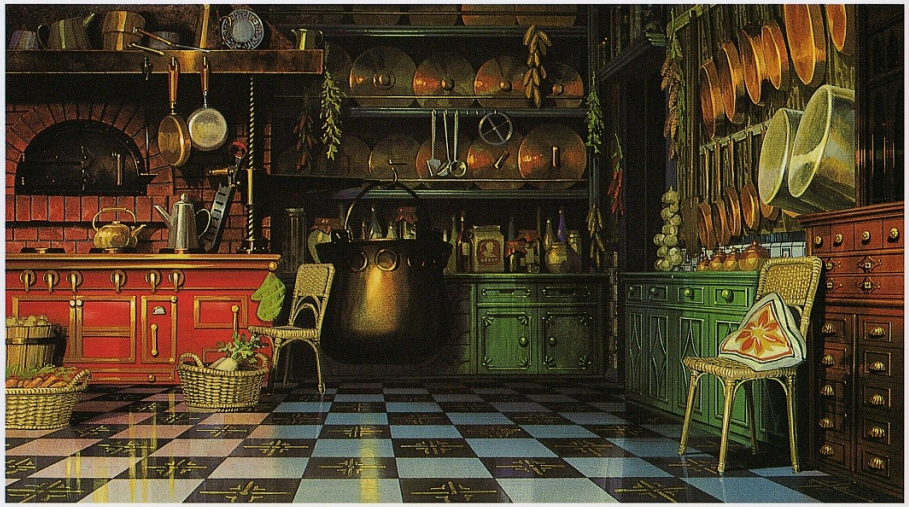

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# YUBABA UPSET

*1-2: Yubaba's kitchen. Used in the scene where Yubaba, convinced that Chihiro has escaped, scolds Aniyaku and the others, only to be interrupted by Haku's sudden appearance. (backgrounds) 3-12: Haku makes Yubaba come to the realization that Baby is gone. Unintimidated by her anger, Haku requests that she return Chihiro and her parents to the human world in return for her child.*

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# The Road In The Dark Forest

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*1-2: The Swamp Bottom station platform with the clock post.*
*3: Once Chihiro and her friends get off, the train moves on, vanishing into the darkness.*
*4-6: Under the moonlight, the group proceeds down the narrow road in the swamp. A lantern with a hand appears, guiding them as it illuminates their path.*

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*1: The lantern serves Zeniba. After accomplishing its task, it hangs from the gate beam.*
*2: Entrance to Zeniba's house. Flowers are painted on the thick plaster walls.*
*3: View of Zeniba's house. It is an old straw thatched farm house with white walls. (background)*
*4: Inside Zeniba's house. (background)*
*5-10: Zeniba welcomes Chihiro's friends and Chihiro, who claims she's come to apologize on behalf of Haku. Zeniba invites them in. She gives the hair-band charm she made with the help of No Face and the others to Chihiro.*

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"Although the designs for Yubaba and Zeniba ended up being the same, they started out different. Her head was the same size as Yubaba's but her height was normal. So she was taller than Yubaba, but there wasn't any room left in the film to develop this new character appearing in the second half of the film. So I suggested that maybe we were better off if she resembled Yubaba. We tried to distinguish them according to the number of rings they wore, but keeping track was impossible, so we simply made them the same. In the end, this actually makes sense, if one considers Yubaba and Zeniba to be two characters in one." (Ando)

## ZENIBA

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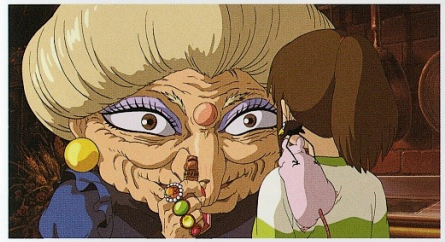

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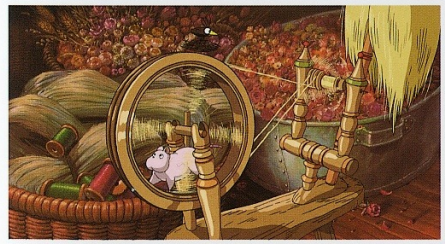

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# Haku Greets Chihiro

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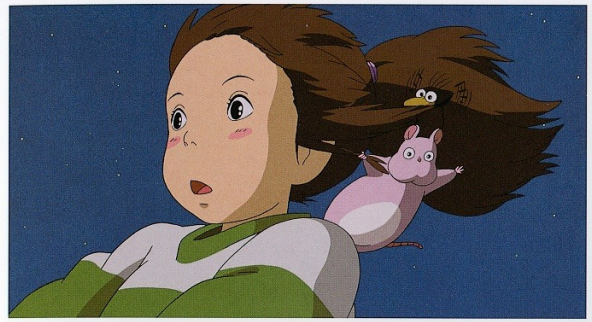

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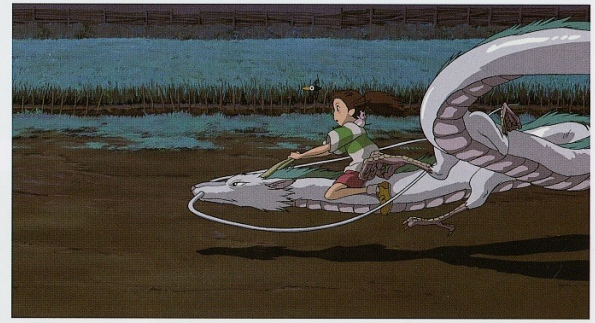
*1-2: After Zeniba advises her, "You must solve your problems on your own," Chihiro decides to return to the bath house. Haku in the form of a dragon greets her for her return.*
*3: Hanging from Fly Bird, Baby Mouse kisses Zeniba goodbye.*
*4: No Face ends up staying behind as Zeniba's helper. He has finally found somewhere he belongs.*
*5-6: Chihiro declares her real name to Zeniba, who remarks as she sees them off, "Chihiro…what a pretty name. You take good care of it."*
*7-9: As Zeniba sees them off, the dragon climbs up into the air, carrying Chihiro.*



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# The Name Of Truth

*1: The dragon climbing up into the large moonlit sky.*
*2-6: As she flies, clutching onto its horns, Chihiro recalls a distant memory where she had nearly drowned in a river. The moment she utters the name of the river, Kohaku River, the dragon's scales scatter like flowers falling, and the dragon turns into Haku.*
*7-14: "Thank you, Chihiro. My real name is Kohaku River." Haku regains his name along with his memory.*

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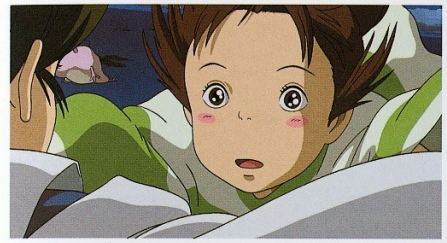

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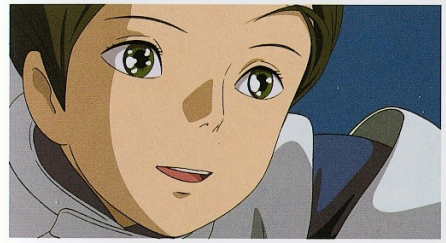

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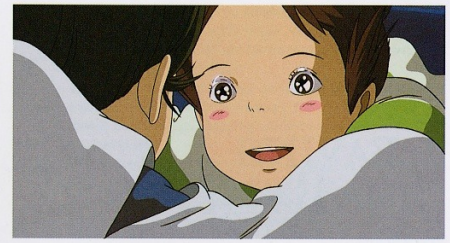

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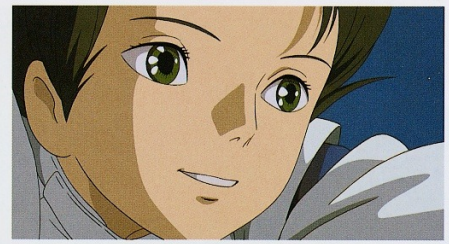

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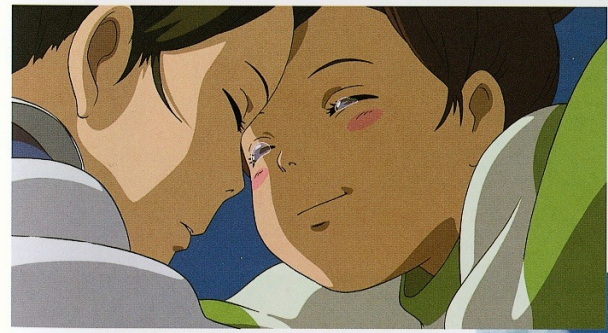

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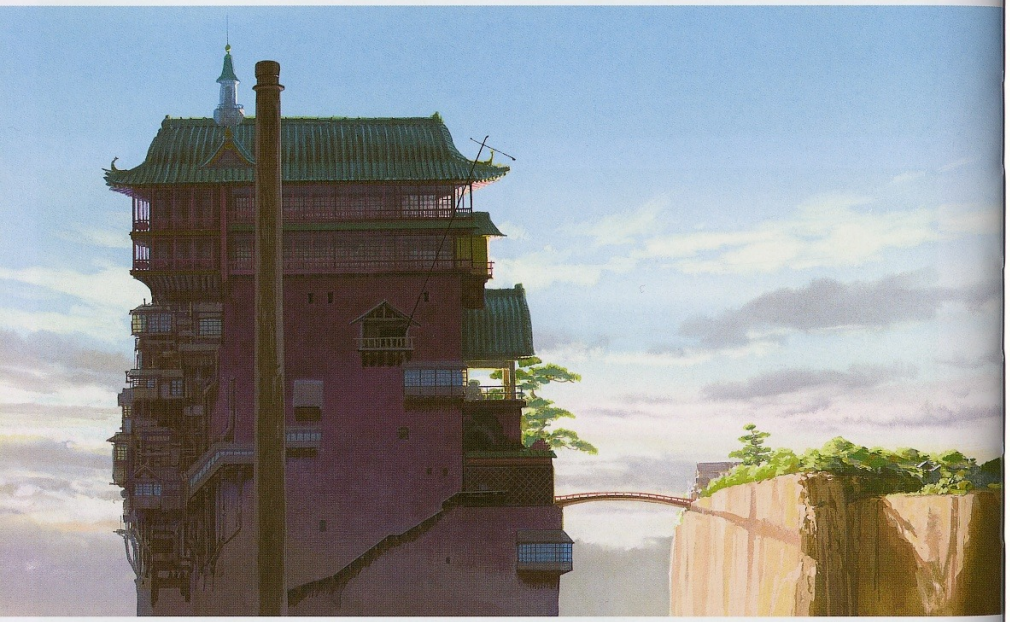
# Leaving The Bath House



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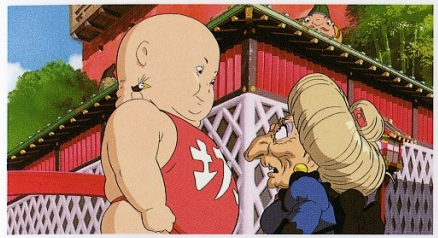

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*1: Bath house at daybreak. Yubaba has shut down the bath house, waiting for her boy's return. (background)*
*2: Yubaba is astonished at how much Baby has matured upon returning with Chihiro.*
*3: The front of the bath house entrance, where Yubaba anxiously awaits her baby boy's arrival. The morning light shines on the bridge while the entrance area is shaded. (background)*
*4-7: In exchange for freeing Chihiro, Yubaba asks Chihiro to choose her parents out of the horde of pigs. Chihiro knows the truth, answering, "They're not here." The workers shout for joy and Chihiro is free to leave the bath house.*

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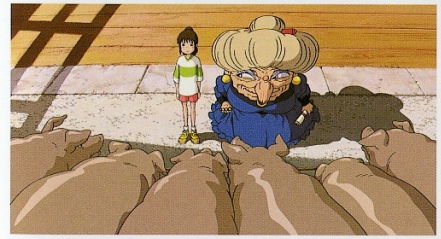

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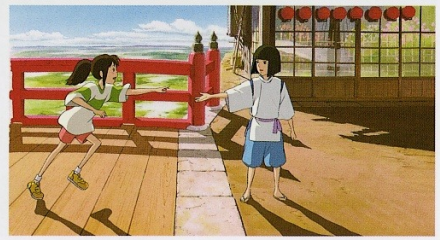

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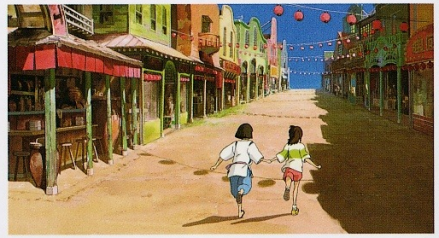
# The Promise



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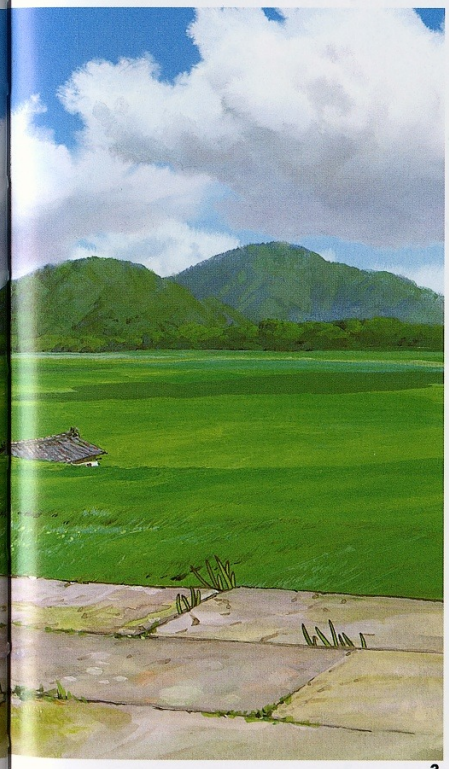

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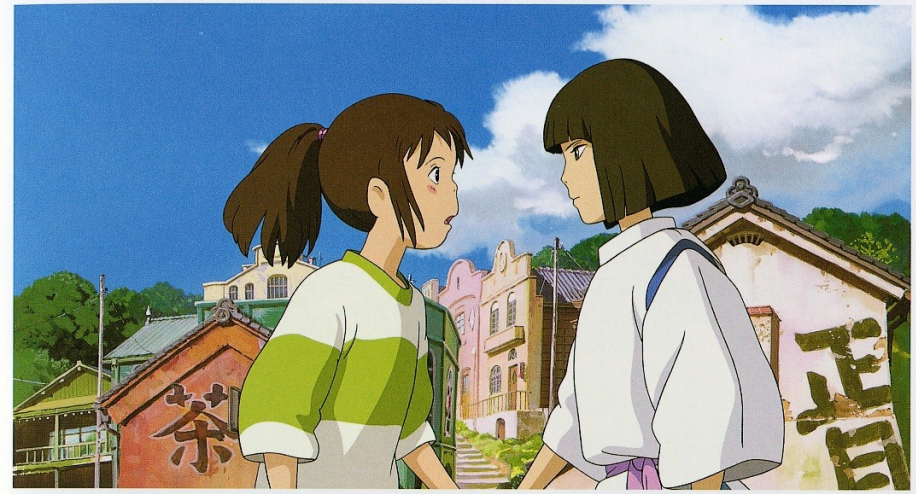

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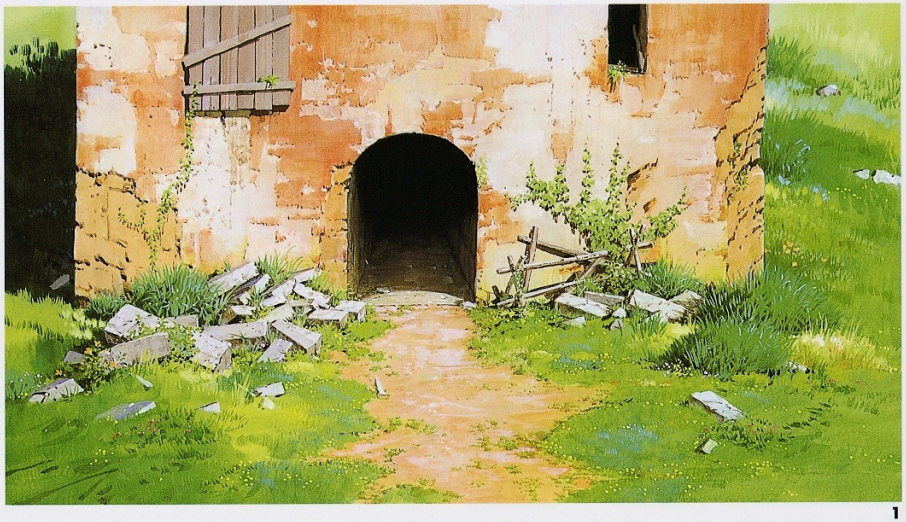
*1-3: Chihiro is led by Haku. After passing a familiar road, she sees the wide open field, with no trace of water.*
*4: "I'll go back to our world." "Will we meet again some time?" "I'm sure we will." "Promise?" "Promise."*
*5: After leaving Haku, Chihiro follows Haku's instructions, "You have to promise not to look back—not until you've passed through the tunnel," and runs down the field on her own.*



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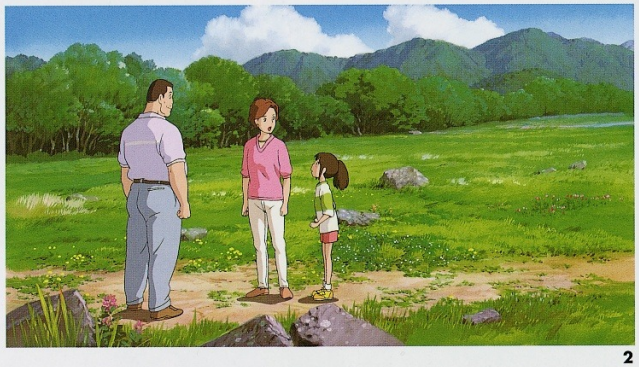
# Returning To The Normal World



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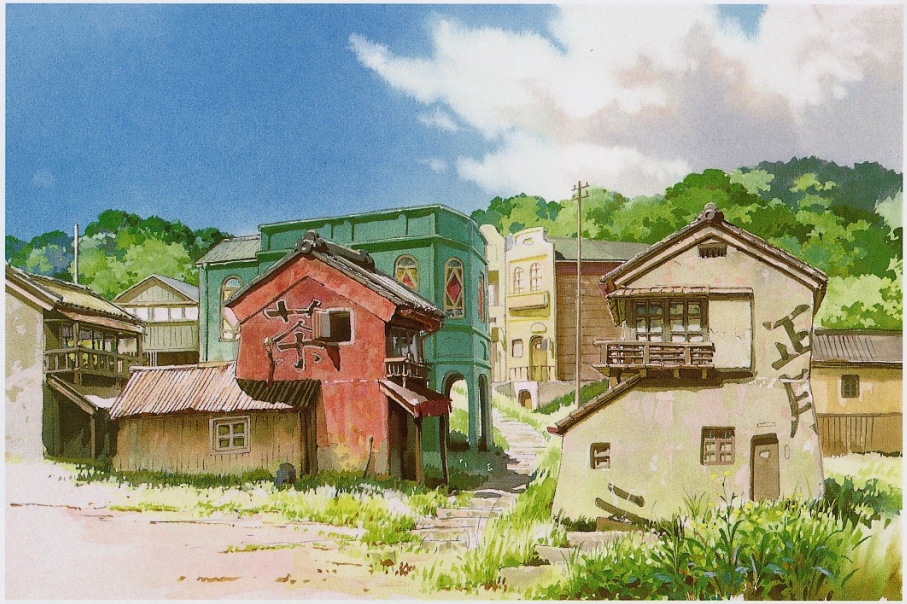
*1: The entrance area of the abandoned building where her parents have been waiting for Chihiro. (background)*
*2-3: Reunited with them, Chihiro finds that her parents don't remember anything. They hurry back the way they came. Time seems to have elapsed outside, though.*
*4: Was the bath house experience a dream? As Chihiro wistfully looks back, the hair-band Zeniba gave her glows.*
*5: The tunnel entrance now covered with tall grass. (background)*
*6: Their car heads out of the forest.*

5

6



1

2

*1: The ruins appearing at the end of the film. The background image in the film was digitally processed. (concept art)*
*2: Chihiro's drifting shoe in the final scene. (concept sketch)*

***Spirited Away*** **is an all-digital film involving computer digitization and compositing. This chapter explains the digital processes developed to support cel-animation production, with commentary by Director of images Atsushi Okui and digital animation supervisor Mitsunori Kataama.**

*Background: rug in Yubaba's room*

# Utilizing Digital Techonlogy to Create "Beautiful" Images.

## Hayao Miyazaki's "policy for digital"

*Spirited Away* is a fully digital animated film. Digital animation is usually associated with images crowded with 3D objects, but that's not what we mean here.

"We consider *Spirited Away* as another step in the hand-illustrated cel-animation process developed through past Ghibli films. We took pains to ensure that CG did not call attention to itself in the film, so we kept the same approach we had for *Princess Mononoke*. CG shouldn't influence the art style. That's what makes Ghibli's approach to CG unique."

Atsushi Okui, whose position changed from Chief of the Camera Department to Director of Images, explained that he wanted to incorporate digital technology into the film without being overwhelmed by it:

"Thanks to CG, we're no longer limited by analog processes. To put it simply, backgrounds and concept art are drawn on paper, but once they're digitized, you can do anything. Colors and other new elements can be added to backgrounds. Concept art can be separated according to various elements and processed accordingly. It's amazing what's possible."

For example, the character No Face was drawn on a single piece of paper by one of the animators. The camera department then processed the elements of his face, arms, legs, and body which were separately created by the painting staff. That's how it was possible to combine both terrifying and humorous elements in the character. No Face was created as a result of the unprecedented close coordination between the animation department, the painting staff, and camera department.

"With my new position as Director of Images I felt more responsible for the overall results of the entire film. My work has expanded with digital animation. But extending myself too far could also affect the other departments. Mr. Miyazaki tells me it's all right to make changes with each supervisor's permission, but it's easier said than done."

It's only natural to get upset by an intruder. At Ghibli, it's no different. With the utilization of digital technology, the cel-animation production system had to be completely reevaluated. That was how Mr. Miyazaki came up with the idea of holding "production meetings."

"When we worked on the previous film, *My Neighbors the Yamadas*, which was our first attempt to make an all-digital film, I'm sure our workplace looked chaotic to Mr. Miyazaki," digital animation supervisor Mitsunori Kataama laughs. Kataama worked in the same office as Okui.

"In most animation productions, once the storyboards are finished, only the animators and art staff hold meetings. The CG staff would only communicate with individual departments after the backgrounds and animation were completed. This time Mr. Miyazaki and the heads of all the departments met after the storyboards were done in order to discuss how we would process every shot. Of course, we couldn't be terribly specific, since we only had the storyboards, but the meeting clarified Mr. Miyazaki's directorial approach, as well as the tasks assigned to each department. The departmental representatives had never held meetings like this before. As a result the work proceeded incredibly smoothly. This time since he was completely immersed in digital technology Mr. Miyazaki claimed his experience was very fulfilling. He continued to remind us though that restraint was essential or else we would end up with poor results.

"When we began production on *Spirited Away*, Mr. Miyazaki announced that he would not alter any of the backgrounds digitally. But once we began, he requested changes like, 'Add a little purple here, or dim the shadow there.' Mr. Miyazaki then claimed it was unavoidable. It would be silly to reject something you could do. But you had to do it with supervision. If something was going to be changed, Mr. Miyazaki insisted on a policy where it was checked with the supervisor in charge. He found all of this interesting. Until now, whether you liked the results or not, you had to use the completed backgrounds and animation as they were. Now, for example, if a character is too big, we can shrink it down to 96% with digital technology. I believe we discovered the merits of digital technology. It's essential though, as Mr. Miyazaki insisted, to exercise restraint and maintain 'a policy for digital.' The production meetings helped us to clarify these approaches."

## CG as another element to construct the image

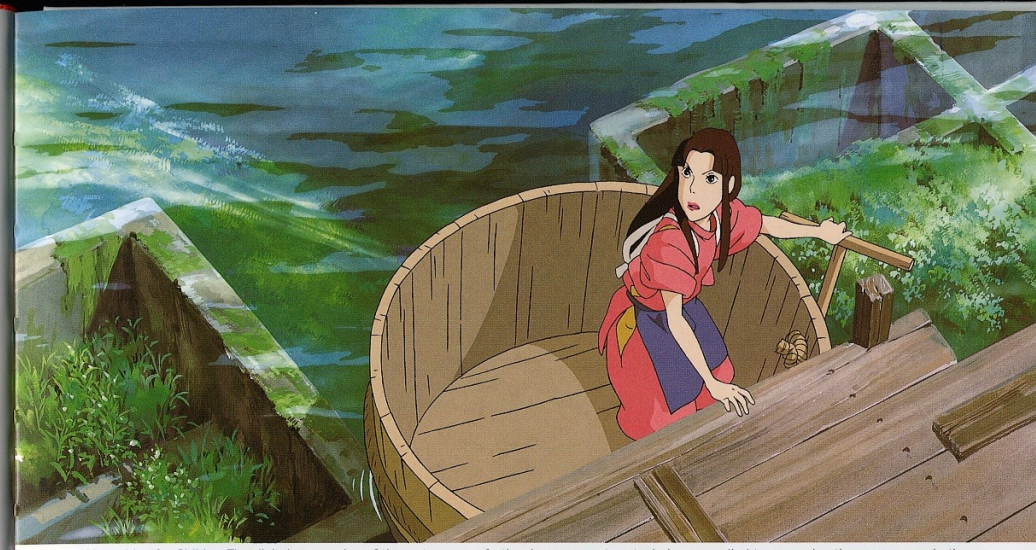
With the incorporation of digital technology, the animation production system must change along with the entire filmmaking process.

"Everyone felt the limitations of cel animation," Kataama claims. "Animation is definitely going to change.

"But Ghibli's philosophy won't change. I wouldn't go so far as to call it a motto, but it's true that everyone at Ghibli has the fundamental drive to make something 'beautiful.' Beautiful backgrounds, beautiful sights. There's a lot of sludge and garbage in *Spirited Away,* but even those have to be visually stunning. I'm not saying it has to be flashy or sleek. We believe we can make beautiful images by depicting them naturally. That's our aim, but there's a physical limitation to cel animation and celluloid film. Atsushi Okui and I often say that an image looks more natural the more you work on it. If the work on the image leaves something to be desired, then it will look unnatural and odd. You have to put in as much effort as you can to make it look natural, so that the audience won't even notice the effort we put in making these images."

But isn't it a pity to have all this CG technology ignored by the viewer?

"That's fine actually," Kataama replies. "The thing is, *Spirited Away* wasn't produced by CG alone. CG is only a step in making these images. Okui and his camera staff assemble the images. We take care of the elements that can be processed easily. Just because everything can be done by CG entirely doesn't mean it should be 100% CG. For example, the supervision of lighting and other effects comes from the camera staff. Their prior experience is absolutely essential to our current work."



*Lin waiting for Chihiro. The digital processing of the water was a further improvement on techniques applied to sea animation sequences in the previous Ghibli film,* My Neighbors the Yamadas. *The resulting image is captivating. Note the sunlight piercing through the sea.*

## The number of colors

CG is being widely used in Hollywood movies and television commercials. The wide range of possibilities it offers are incredibly impressive. In a way, CG provides a magical tool, making any object appear on the screen. On the other hand, there are those critical of digital animation, insisting that it looks empty and superficial.

Kataama sees why.

"There aren't enough colors. Most digital animation made in Japan have 16,770,000 colors, which means it's in the 8-bit format. That sounds like a lot of colors, but it's actually very minute. Celluloid film is very sensitive. When an image lights up on film, it doesn't turn white immediately, but changes gradually before turning white. In the 8-bit format, there are only 256 degrees in RGB [Red, Green, Blue], so the change from dark to bright comes in even stages. There aren't enough gradations in 8-bit when you try to express light, so the colors jump.

"The human eye is very sensitive to light and darkness, so it can detect the color shift, and that's the weakness of the 8-bit format. *Princess Mononoke* was only 8-bit, so we ended up unsatisfied with the lighting in that film. The 16-bit format was only fully applied with *My Neighbors the Yamadas.* The 256-color system was inadequate to depict the faint colors of water colors. So the background digitization and character composites were both converted to 16 bits. 16 bits is 16,770,000 colors squared, so it offers an astronomical number of colors. That's the only way you can achieve the variety of color celluloid film offers."

Application tools for 16-bit are utilized both by the CG Department and Camera Department. But even if the software calculations are in 16-bit, corresponding output hardware is still unavailable. Current computers don't have the technology to display 16-bit animation.

"Well, we just had to rely on our knowledge and feel. Right now we can only assume that if it looks good in 8-bit then in 16-bit it will look fine."

Even though digital technology is considered flawless, as long as it remains a tool it has its limitations. The staff at Ghibli are trying to go beyond the limitations inherent in various software and hardware. If the film production tools they need don't exist, they've decided to produce them on their own.

"We hired computer programmers for Ghibli from *Princess Mononoke* onward.

"Current software doesn't exactly meet our requirements. So we end up having to compromise. So we decided we'd come up with the software ourselves. We've developed many programs. With digital paint you slab on a single color, but with cel animation even one color isn't really just one color. That's why digital paint can look bad. It's especially obvious to any viewer when the digital data is directly converted to the DLP format without any celluloid involved. There were only four theaters in Japan that could project this format, so in order to produce softer images, we had a program developed that would add slight noise to them. These are small tools we have programmed, but I believe they will be absolutely essential for future animation projects."

Digital technology has opened up many unanticipated possibilities for animation production.

The following pages provide specific examples of digital technology.

# Digital Animation

## Animation for the River Spirit Sequence

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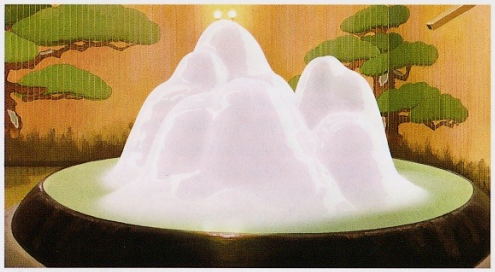

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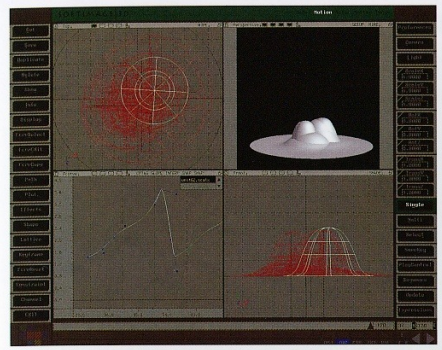
4

*Thanks to Chihiro and Yubaba's efforts, the river spirit immersed in sludge throws up all his garbage, leaping out of the bath completely cleansed. This explosive sequence was created by CG. The combination of light reflections and shadows produced a sequence of unprecedented stunning images.*





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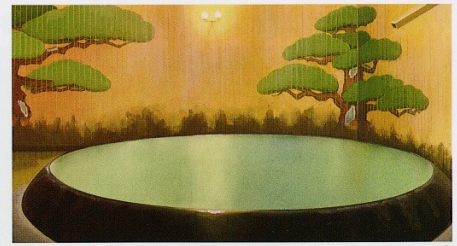

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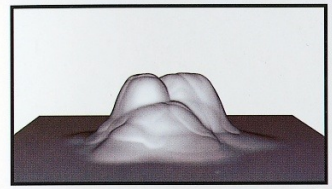
*Computer screen for Softimage program (5). Basic background painted by art department (6).*



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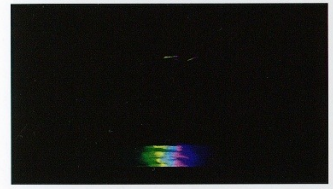

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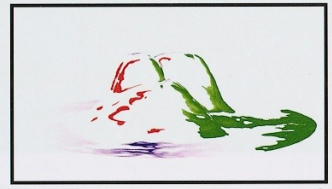

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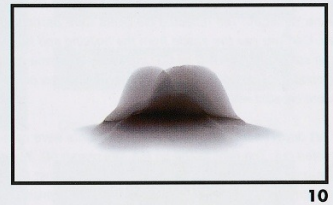

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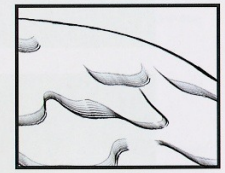
*Layering 3D objects on background (7). Preparation of reflection elements only (8). These reflection elements consist of hand-drawn highlighting and separate color drawings. Note how the reflections are also animated (9). Black and white gradation elements depict the thickness of foam (10).*

## The River Spirit Morphing

*The animation for the sludge pouring out of the river spirit was produced by morphing the gradation lines in the animation drawing. Morphing is similar to the blending function in the design software, Illustrator. The gradation lines are created by pointing at the sludge lines of the key drawing (2-3). They resemble the lines of a contour map.*

1



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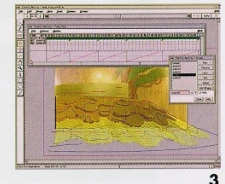

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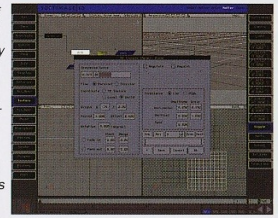
# Processing the Sea Surface

1

*The sea surface appears in the sequence where Haku returns. The processing of the sea surface in* Spirited Away *was based on the techniques utilized in Ghibli's previous film* My Neighbors the Yamadas. *The reflected elements were particularly emphasized in* Spirited Away. *Can you see the shade from the building and light reflections projected onto the surface? Produced by CG, the reflected elements, which form a moving background, provide an illustration of the advantages of digital technology. The waves were created with Softimage (2).*

*Background painted by the art department (3). The following elements were composited by CG for the completed cut. The light falling on the sea marsh (4). Waves (5). (3), (4), and (5) were composited to form (6). The wall reflected against the sea (7). Reflection elements combining (5) and (7) form (8). The white waves are animated from the key drawings, morphed into gradation lines (9).*



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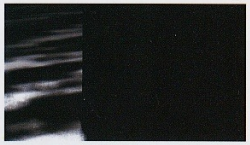

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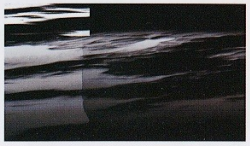

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# View of the Islet Seen from the Train Window

1

*Chihiro's subjective point of view from the train window as she heads toward Zeniba's house. The clouds drift by slowly, and the islet floating on the sea rotates slowly along with Chihiro's shifting angle of perception. The scene only lasts several seconds, but its calm beauty provides a nice contrast to the liveliness of the bath house.*

2

3

4

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6

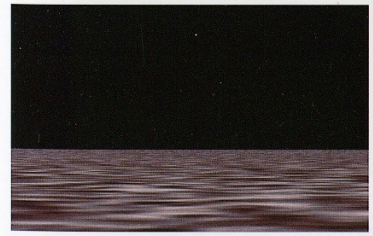
7

*Clouds drawn in book program (4-7).*

8

9

*Background drawn by the art department (2). The CG department removed the islet and added more contours to the clouds and water surface (3). The islet was pasted as a 3D object to emphasize its space (8). Its reflection against the sea surface was created by CG (9).*



10

*Utilizing the waves created by the CG department (10), the art department painted the water surface elements (11) which were then composited for emphasis. The water in* Spirited Away *was depicted in many different ways. Depending on the style that suited each sequence, the water might resemble cel animation or have a more photographic appearance. This one shows a water image that closely resembles the background.*

11

## Mapping of the Chinese Restaurant Plates

1

*The top left plate was painted with as much detail as an entire background drawing. The pattern is mapped onto a 3D object. "If we had drawn it as cel animation, the viewer would have been able to tell it was going to move before it was supposed to move. Irritated by this, Mr. Miyazaki suggested an alternative. So we came up with a kind of background animation where a part that looks like the background actually ends up moving," Kataama explains. Note the reflection and shade on the plate.*

2

3

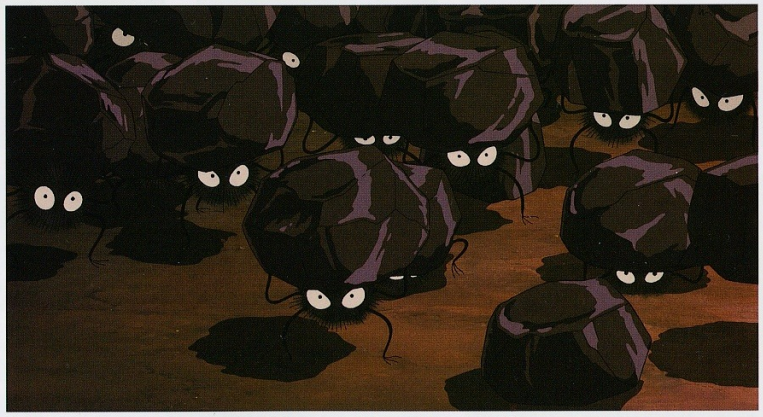
4

5

# Image Production

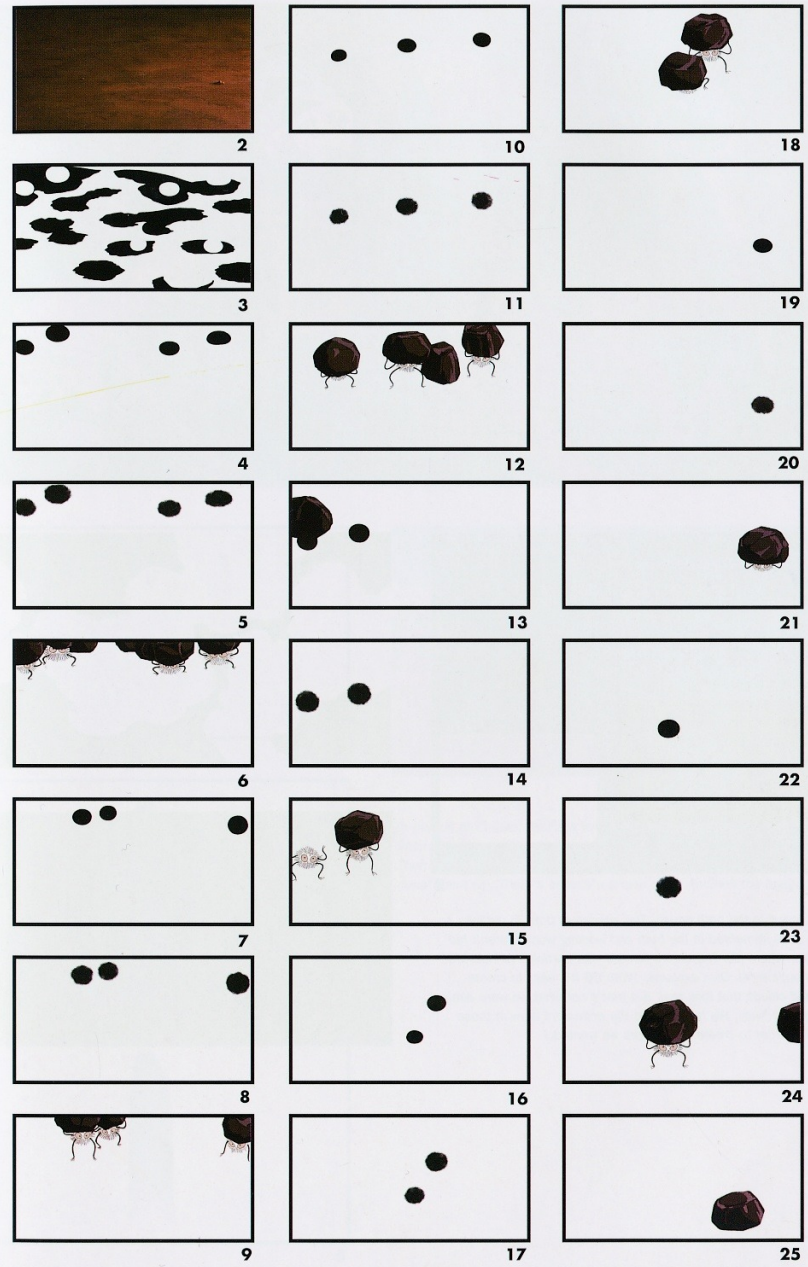
## Susuwatari Analysis

*The Susuwatari were separated thoroughly in order to depict their bodies, eyes, and soot between their arms and legs. On top of this, due to their large number on the screen, the number of layered animations drastically increased. The right diagram consists of 24 sheets. For cel animation, alphabet letters were assigned to each sheet in order to keep track of the layering order. Digital utilizes multilayering composites instead of cels. Due to the additional special effects there were not enough letters in the alphabet to label each layer.*



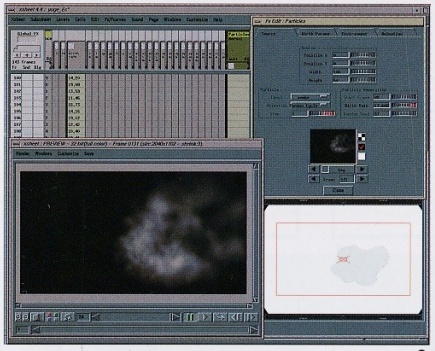
1

*The Susuwatari consist of their bodies, arms and legs, and the charcoal they carry. "If everything is separated according to their elements at the animation stage, the proceeding work is easy. But that also makes conceiving the drawings more difficult." Okui emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between the two tasks.*



# Steam

1



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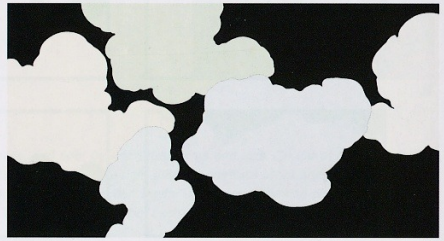


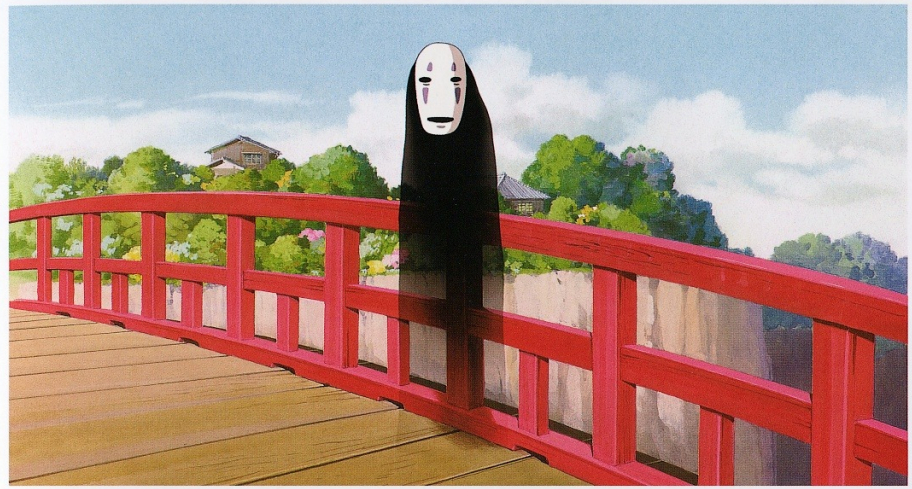
3

4

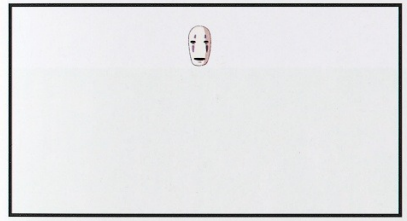
*Bathing scene in the bath house. The animators draw in outlines so that the gods immersed in the bath and working women aren't hidden by the steam (3). The steam formed with particles is inserted into this outline (4). Okui explains, "With CG it's easy to create steam and clouds that look real. But that's not what we were aiming for in* Spirited Away. *We had to have the animators draw in those outlines in order to create the images we wanted."*



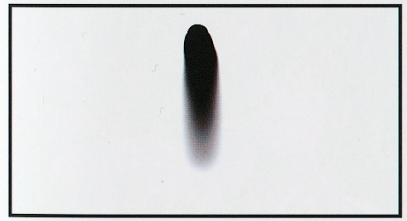
# No Face Turning Invisible



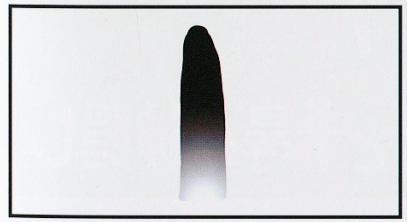
1



3



4



5

2

*In pursuit of Chihiro, No Face wreaks havoc on the bath house. After the animators draw his body, the painting staff separates it into its elements. Then it is processed (3-5). Also, note the backgrounds painted by the art department (2). There's already a shade of No Face on the bridge.*

*Official posters for the film based on concept sketches drawn by the director, Hayao Miyazaki.*



WALT DISNEY STUDIOS PRESENTS

A STUDIO GHIBLI FILM

# MIYAZAKI'S SPIRITED AWAY

ORIGINAL STORY & SCREENPLAY

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY

## HAYAO MIYAZAKI

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ADAPTATION BY

## CINDY DAVIS HEWITT & DONALD H. HEWITT

SPIRITED AWAY English-language adaptation © Walt Disney Pictures.

# PROFILES

**Masashi Ando** *Supervising Animator*
Masashi Ando was born 1969 in Hiroshima. He left Nippon University after being recruited to be an assistant during Studio Ghibli's second year. After working on *Only Yesterday* (1991) as an in-betweener, he was promoted to key animator for *Porco Rosso* (1992). He supervised basic drawings for *Ocean Waves* (1993), *Pompoko* (1994), and *Whisper of the Heart* (1995). He became supervising animator for the short film *On Your Mark* (1995) and later *Princess Mononoke* (1997). He was a key animator for *My Neighbors the Yamadas* (1999).

**Yoji Takeshige** *Art Director*
Yoji Takeshige was born 1964 in Philadelphia. After leaving the oil painting department of Tama Art University, he was hired by Ghibli as a background artist for *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988). He worked on *Only Yesterday* and officially joined Studio Ghibli during the production of *Porco Rosso*. He supervised backgrounds for *Pompoko* and *Whisper of the Heart* and was art director for *On Your Mark*, *My Neighbors the Yamadas*, and *Princess Mononoke*. He has also worked on the non-Ghibli films *Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honneamise* (1987), *Mobile Police Patlabor* (1989), and *Ghost in the Shell* (1995).



**Atsushi Okui** *Director of Images*
Atsushi Okui was born in 1964 in Shimane Prefecture. He began his work in cinematography working for Asahi Production in 1981. He first became camera supervisor for the film *Dirty Pair* (theatrical release, 1987). He was camera supervisor for *Mobile Suit Gundam: Char's Counterattack* (1988) and *Mobile Suit Gundam: F91* (1991). He first worked for Ghibli as the camera supervisor for *Porco Rosso*. Okui officially joined Ghibli when its camera department was established in 1993. He has worked as camera supervisor for subsequent Ghibli films *Ocean Waves*, *Pompoko*, *Whisper of the Heart*, *Princess Mononoke*, and *My Neighbors the Yamadas*.

**Mitsunori Kataama** *Digital Animation Supervisor*
Mitsunori Kataama was born in 1964 in Yamaguchi Prefecture. After leaving the art department design program of Tokyo Geijutsu University, he was hired by Taiyo Kikaku's CG department to work on commercials. He was hired by Links in 1990 and was subcontracted by Ghibli for the CG sections of *On Your Mark*. He joined Studio Ghibli when its CG department was established in 1995. He was CG supervisor for *Princess Mononoke* and *My Neighbors the Yamadas*. He also worked on the non-Ghibli films *Kirin Mets + Iron Rider* (TV commercial, 1987), *Macross 7 (Opening)* (1994), and *Macross Plus* (theatrical release, 1995).

# The Art Of
# MIYAZAKI'S
# SPIRITED AWAY

THE ART OF SPIRITED AWAY

BASED ON THE STUDIO GHIBLI FILM
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WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY HAYAO MIYAZAKI

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